

GIGER'S ALIEN



FILMDESIGN

20th
CENTURY
FOX

\$27.50 U.S.

ALIEN. What a perfectly appropriate title for a film in which H.R. Giger displays his uniquely gripping style. It is the word which, in a sense, best describes this Swiss artist's masterful design work.

Giger's ALIEN is a journey. It is, however, not a journey for the overly sensitive. Take a deep breath and find a comfortable seat as the Charon-Giger poles through the black, murky depths of his nightmare imagination and shines his lantern light of paint and brush onto the mysterious and unsettling images that only he could conceive and illuminate.

Follow along with Giger as he describes the genesis, gestation, and final cinematic birth of the bizarrely brilliant creations of his singular imagination and talent. The result is one of the most successful marriages of design, art and film in the history of cinema: A marriage that culminated in Giger receiving the Academy Award for his efforts.

Since the first elegantly baroque Alien crept from the dank shadows of the original 1979 film, there have been three sequels presented to an eagerly anticipating audience. Different films all, save for the one thread that binds them together - the captivating imagery and style of Swiss designer H.R. Giger. Although he was not asked to work on ALIENS or ALIEN RESURRECTION and had very little input into ALIEN3, the power of that unique imagery is still more than sufficient to bug eyes and slack jaws. It is not just the potent horror that the film's milieu presents. It is the effect of such intense gracefulness and grotesqueness synthesized into a strangely compelling new form. From the landscape of that remote world to the derelict craft and its bizarre, hungry secrets, Giger's art and craft have given us something very special indeed. One can only wonder as to the amazing level the visual impact those subsequent films could have reached were the creator of the original magic given the free reign so many would have loved him to have had. However, such a thing is rare in Hollywood. Perhaps one should be grateful for whatever this Promethean fantasist was allowed to create under the encouraging auspices of director Ridley Scott, whose self-confidence and artistic eye gave him the vision to permit genius to romp unbound.

-James R. Cowan

H.R. Giger books, calendars, posters, signed limited edition prints and original works available from

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I should like to thank

Dan O'Bannon, Ron Shusett, Gordon Carroll, David Giler, Ridley Scott, Peter Beale, Sandy Lieberman, Denise Breton, Michael Seymour, Les Dilley, Ivor Powell, Stanley Bielecki, Brian Johnson, Nick Alder, Ken Hill, Bob Penn, Peter Voysey, Eddy Butler, Patty Rodgers, Shirley Denny, Valerie Craig, Bill Welch, Bob Jordan, Walter Hill, Bob Dingilian, Gareth Wigan, Charley Lippincott and all the others I worked with and without whom this book could never have been printed.

This book is a volume of pictures documenting the production of the film *Alien*, the biggest project I have worked on since the beginning of my career as a painter. I have deliberately written the text with the aid of my diaries, to show the part I played in the whole undertaking.

When I paint in the privacy of my studio I have no room for compromise. That must be why, during the production, I was so often disappointed, confused, impatient and fussy. I also know that, very

often, I upset and infuriated my colleagues when I indulged in harsh criticism and insisted on my own designs. Ignorant as I was of the technicalities of big film production, I lacked the necessary breadth of view to see that what was also possible by improvisation.

I see things differently today. I must admit that I have learnt a great deal; all the time I spent in the studios at Shepperton I look back on as highly positive.

I recognize now that Brandywine Productions, Twentieth Century Fox and Dan O'Bannon made it possible for me to realize my dream – my fantasy world – in three dimensions.

I therefore ask everyone to forgive me if I often write about events as I saw them then, in my complete, highly subjective commitment.

Laugh with me, or over, my worrying so much, my outbreaks of rage, my complaints, as I have written about them in the last part of my text.

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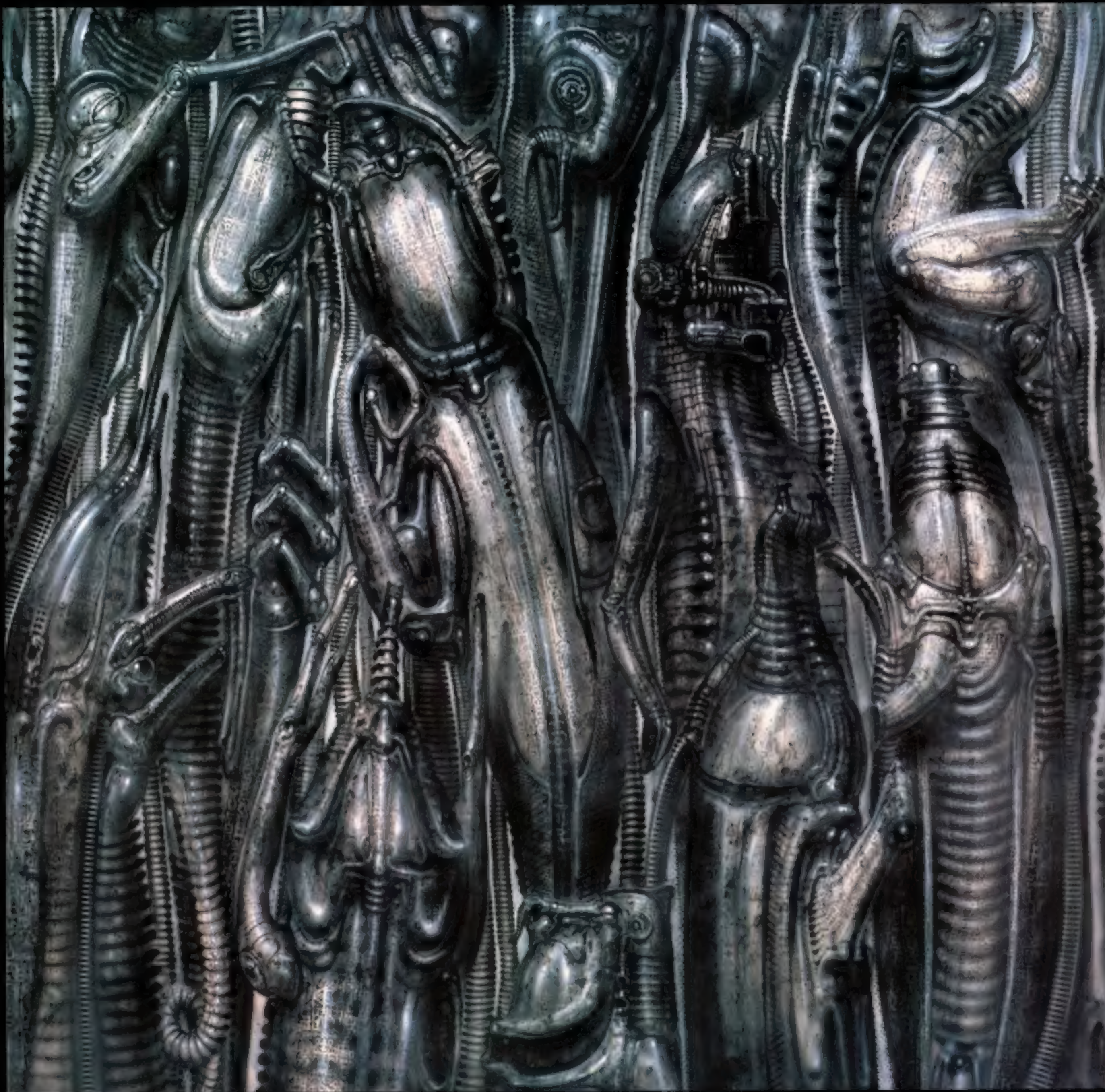
Cover *Alien monster I* (Giger's *Alien*), Acryl, 140 x 140 cm, No. 406

Inside cover: H.R. Giger – photograph, Verena Eggman

Page 3: *Alien monster II*, Acryl, 140 x 140 cm, No. 407

Page 5: *Alien monster III*, Acryl, 140 x 140 cm, No. 409

Page 72: *Alien monster V*, 140 x 140 cm, No. 410



Each cultural epoch in human history produces its unforgettable visionary artist – a genius (always accompanied and inspired by his *Anima Mia*), who is energized to voyage within; to trip through the galaxy of his own nervous system and return with vital information about the past and future of our evolution.

These Explorer Reports are never verbal. Local hive language cannot describe processes which are bio-chemical, neuro-gynological, post-terrestrial. The essences of life must be presented visually in paintings, diagrams, sketches – which give us eye-ball contact with what exists ahead and beyond the limits of our own little village.

William Blake, Hieronymous Bosch, Eliphas Lévi, Ernst Fuchs, Salvador Dali are illustrious members of this magi company; prophetic see-ers, fore-caste observers who navigate far-high above the migrating columns of humans and flash back their perceptions. Such paintings inevitably shock, disturb, upset domesticated primates who are unprepared to deal with hot-raw-flesh reality seen with clarity.

These visionaries like Giger over-stand too much. They over-look. They over-see. They over-state. They over-thrill. They physically frighten dutiful hive-members who often become nauseous or screamingly panicked by this simple exposure to the tissue-fact and cellular fabric of life.

Clara-faction artists like Giger are often censored, ignored, imprisoned, burned-at-the-stake, kidnapped to Hollywood or, more often, carted off to asylums. Because *they* are the aliens, the mutants. Higher Intelligences, unidentified Flying Organisms – too different, too revealing to be tolerated.

And yet, their works endure. They fascinate. They endure. Down the membrane corridors of cultural-memory these magi recognize each other and pass on their moist-squirming-egg-sperm message of evolution.

Oh yes, our own H. R. Giger belongs to this crew of elite, blessed Alienists whose thankless task it is to keep the human race in moist touch with our shadowy, primordial, fangclaw-scaley past and keep us, as well, in moist pre-vue of our cyborg-McLuhan-Larry-Flynt, bionic future.

Neurology (and science's new publicity man, Carl Sagan) tells us that our nervous systems still

FOREWORD BY TIMOTHY LEARY



contain all the brain structures which served our ancestors in the jungle-swamp periods of our early evolution. We have, each of us, an amoeba brain equipped for slurpy-sucking-floating, and a slimy-coiling serpent brain and a wily, snarling animal brain and a cruel, bloody paleolith brain. Resting uneasily in our visceral fissures, our cerebral aqueducts, our spinal tubes and cortical lobes, they appear leering in our dreams, in our opium visions. And they heroically spring to our aid in moments of ghetto crisis when their ancient survival cunning is necessary.

Giger, we bless you for taking us back down to meet and coil and intertwine with our old Darwinian relatives.

Giger reminds us that unless we can accept, admire, use these tentacled, lizardy, octopus ancestors from our past then we die fearful, superstitious urban robots. Giger's paintings like those of Blake and Dali are basically loving and raunchy-erotic. They tenderly, humorously confront us with the ribbed cages, the sleek struts and tendon fibres, the smooth-lube-tubes of our own beloved soft-machines. And the warm, moist, squishy carnality of our lovers.

Even more deeply, perhaps, than Bosch, Giger faces the trembly, slimy wonder of human egg-production. Impregnation! Pregnancy! Oh, what a lover of the female Mia-Gaia is this Giger!

Giger's art is timeless. A hundred, a thousand years from now – as long as our species inhabits soft-machine bodies his courageous bio-scapes and neuro-graphs will shock and delight those who know or want to know – of whom we are made.

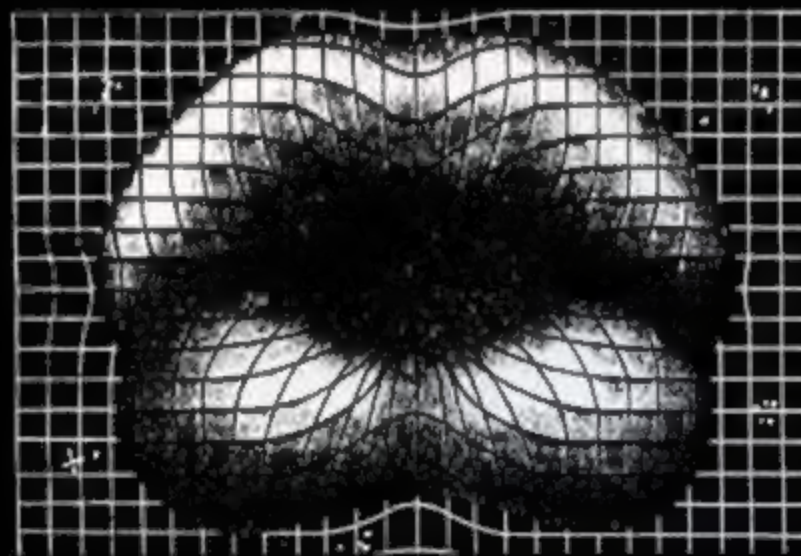
The book you hold in your hand, *Giger's Alien*, portrays the making of the monster film. It documents the shadowy birth of this mysterious squishy creature who has been terrorizing movie audiences all over the world. Witchcraft, thy name is membrane-flesh.

Giger's Alien is not an evil, scary creature. There is no evil in Giger. There is no evil in the poppy-magnified cell-growths within our bodies. The worst thing you can say about Giger's *Alien* is this: She eats to live. Is She ugly? No more ugly than we would look to any member of the food-chain that we regularly and thoughtlessly pop in our red, gulping, adenoidal mouths three times a day.

Giger's art has consistently wrestled with the paradox of *The Beauty and the Beast*. Thus he adds another chapter to the wondrous encyclopedia of mutants who represent those aspects of ourselves that we are not ready to wine-and-dine with.

But now, my friends, let us re-joyce. It is revival time for the Old Genetic Magical-Mystery-Pre-vues. Dracula is now re-scene as a tender nuzzling, nibbling lover whispering immortality into the orgasm-ear of his bride. And HAL, the romantic, all-too-Jewish computer of 2001 Space Odyssey (at least, like Woody Allen, he wasn't a jogger) goes down singing a love song to Daisy. And King Kong's Capulat love for the ill starred Fay.

Giger, how proud you must be! They're all applauding you from the projection booths of the quantum future – all the great smiling wizards of the past who always walked with winged angel on one shoulder and winged-devil on the other. Pythagoras, Houdini, Aleister Crowley, Gurdjieff, Magda, Mia, the great mid-evil sorceress Barbarella, all the laughing fabled magi and prophets. How chuckling Eliphas Levi is, right now, as he watches his unicorn, in Giger's genius hand, pierce the soft-spongy heart of the millions who squirm watching this clock busting Hollywood moving picture.



To Mia & Giger who already
are with us in the FUTURE!
Barbara Leary
5-23-79



So many people have wondered: 'How do you get into films?' I was lucky; Bob Venosa, a fellow-painter, who often used to be entertained by the surrealist Salvador Dali – they lived in the same village, Cadaqués in Spain – had taken my catalogue to show him. He asked Dali what he thought of my work. Dali evidently approved of it, for he showed the catalogue to the producer Alexandro Jodorowsky, who intended to film the *Dune* trilogy, a science fiction novel by Frank Herbert. Venosa told me on the telephone how keen Jodorowsky was on my work. What he told me seemed a good reason for making a journey to Spain. Unfortunately, by the time I got there Jodorowsky had already left. But later, when I was visiting Paris, I went purely out of curiosity to see him in his office. He clearly still thought he could use me for the *Dune* designs. When I got back to Zürich I got some of my ideas down on paper and went to Paris to hand my suggestions over to him in person. Jodorowsky flew to the United States in search of a producer, taking my work and that of some other people. Presumably he had no luck, for I never saw him again. All I had left was the address of another disappointed man



(he was to have done the special effects in *Dune*); his name was Dan O'Bannon, the author of *Alien*.

"Seven astronauts, two women and five men, are in the space-ship *Nostromo* on a return flight to Earth. On the way they come across a planet unknown to them and decide to make an unscheduled landing to explore it. Three members of the crew are chosen to make a reconnaissance.

INTRODUCTION

They soon find themselves in an enormous range of mountains. Suddenly they catch sight of a huge derelict among the rocks, an unusual type of space-ship. They begin to explore it, and come across a strangely equipped cockpit. In the centre of the room, which is as big as a hangar, is a kind of pilot's seat, and in it the skeleton of some non-human creature. They draw the obvious conclusion that this was once the commander of the space vehicle, and that he must have died some mysterious death, for there is a huge hole in his chest cavity. The astronauts, who can find no other living being nor any remains of one, leave the wreck, and a little later they come across a group of pyramids, half collapsed. In the hope of finding some clue to what they have just seen, they climb up the best preserved of the pyramids; for the entrance is apparently at the top. When they get to the top the astronauts rig up a system of ropes so that one of them can go down and reconnoitre the inside of the pyramid. Since, rather surprisingly, the atmospheric conditions on the planet are the same as those on Earth, the astronaut who is venturing into the unknown decides to take off his helmet and leave it at the top. Taking no more than a torch and a radio, he slides down the rope. Moist, warm vapours rise up all round him. At last he reaches the floor of the pyramid. The light from his torch falls on unknown, mysterious shapes in the form of hieroglyphics on the walls. On the ground he catches sight of some strange objects, like spore-capsules or eggs. He passes all this information up to his companions by radio, as they wait for him at the entrance up above. Cautiously he goes up to one of the capsules and gently touches it. At once a lid springs open and a loathsome creature jumps out of the opening straight into his face and forces a tube down the petrified man's throat. The long radio silence has made the watchers at the entrance anxious. After some time, when there is still no sign of life from below, they decide to haul their companion up again. As they pull him into the light, they see with horror what has happened to their still unconscious companion. They cannot prise the disgusting

creature loose from his face, so there is nothing for it but to take them both back to the mother-ship *Nostromo*. There he is taken at once to the operating-theatre and X-rayed. The picture shows a tube-like proboscis reaching down inside him, ending at the top of his lungs; it has given a dark colour to the tissue. They try to cut the brute away with a scalpel. At the first incision a yellow, acid fluid spurts out and instantly eats through the table with a sizzling noise.

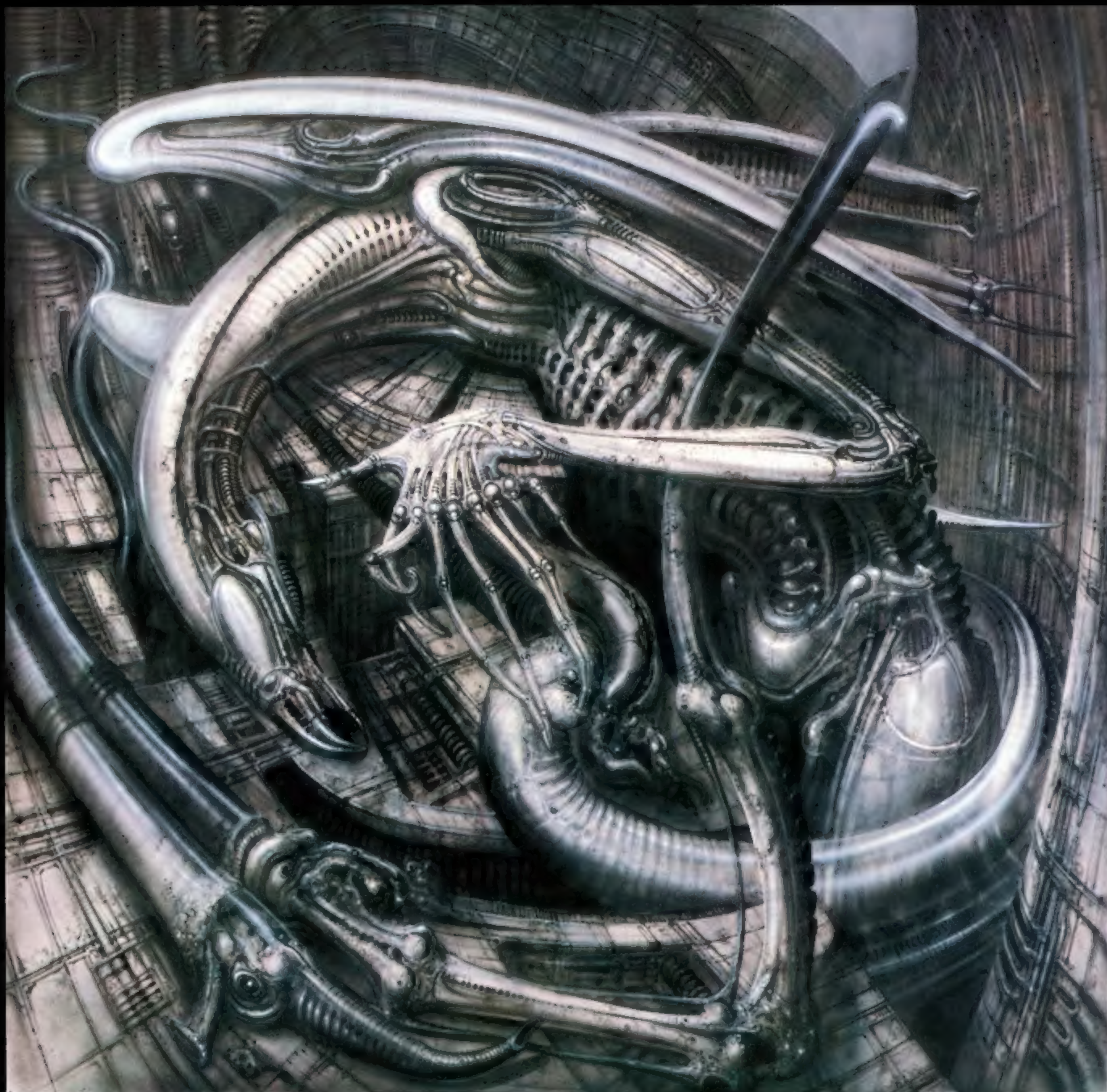
At a loss, the crew withdraws to discuss what action they should take. When someone looks at the sick man again the beast is lying on the floor, rolled up and lifeless. The astronaut has recovered consciousness, but cannot remember anything and feels no pain at all.

About three weeks later, as they are having dinner, the dreadful thing happens. The man who had been attacked by the animal doubles up in agony, strikes out all round him like a madman and screams with pain, so that the terrified crew have to hold him down. Suddenly his T-shirt is stained with blood, and a disgusting creature bursts out of his chest. A head smeared with blood and a squat body become visible. From its mouth, an opening filled with small, sharp teeth, there comes a cry; the beast breaks loose, squirming out of its imprisonment, and darts across the table like lightning. The crew, paralysed with shock, slowly get back into action. Too late! Alien II, the Chestbuster, has disappeared into the maze of passages in the *Nostromo*; quickly it grows up into Alien III, spreading terror and death."

Such is the outline of the first version of the story, taken from O'Bannon's notebook.

I gained a lot of experience during my contribution to the production of the film *Alien*. The frenzy of enthusiasm with which I started changed towards the end into a sort of supersaturation, an almost lethargic frame of mind.

But the moment I got back to Zürich, still under the psychic spell of my adventure, I couldn't wait to paint five more pictures of the *Alien* creatures. After these intensive months, I couldn't suddenly break off. Painting those pictures helped me to find my way back to my life-style, which I had practically given up during the whole of my time in England.



EARLY DESIGN

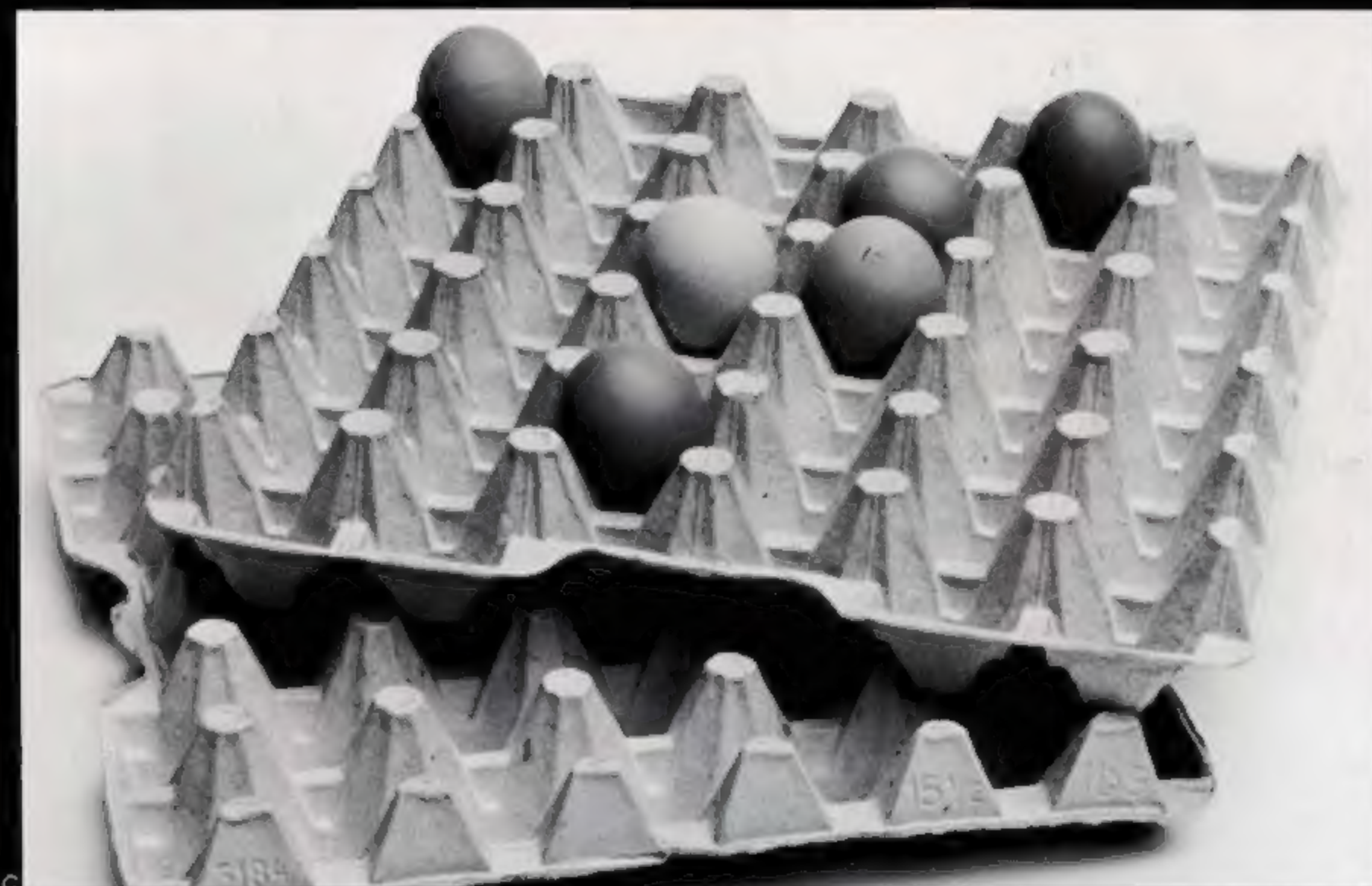
July 1977 I get an entirely unexpected telephone call from Dan O'Bannon in Hollywood. He speaks very slowly, so that in spite of my poor English I can understand the important things in store for me. He is talking about a new project for a film called *Alien*. He tells me that, when the *Dune* project broke down, he went back to Hollywood, and soon afterwards he was very ill. A tiresome stomach trouble. He had lain sick in bed at the home of his friend Ron Shusett, and had still managed to work out the *Alien* story with his friend's help. When he was better he had written to the *SF Horror Story* and made the suggestion that the fearsome *Alien* monster should be created by me. Brandywine Productions, consisting of Gordon Carroll, David Giler and Walter Hill, were approached to put up the capital for the production of the film. He says he will let me have a letter setting out the main things he would want me to create. Unfortunately there isn't much money available yet, but enough to advance me a thousand dollars, so that I shouldn't feel that I'd be working for nothing any more. However, first I have to wait for the letter, to see whether the whole thing is really going to interest me. We are about half an hour talking on the telephone. Now I wait excitedly to see what will happen next.



A



B



C

363a: Sketch for the pyramid
363b: Pyramid interior with eggs, model photograph
363c: Swiss egg carton

363i: Cross-section through the *Alien* egg (VI), 100 x 70 cm



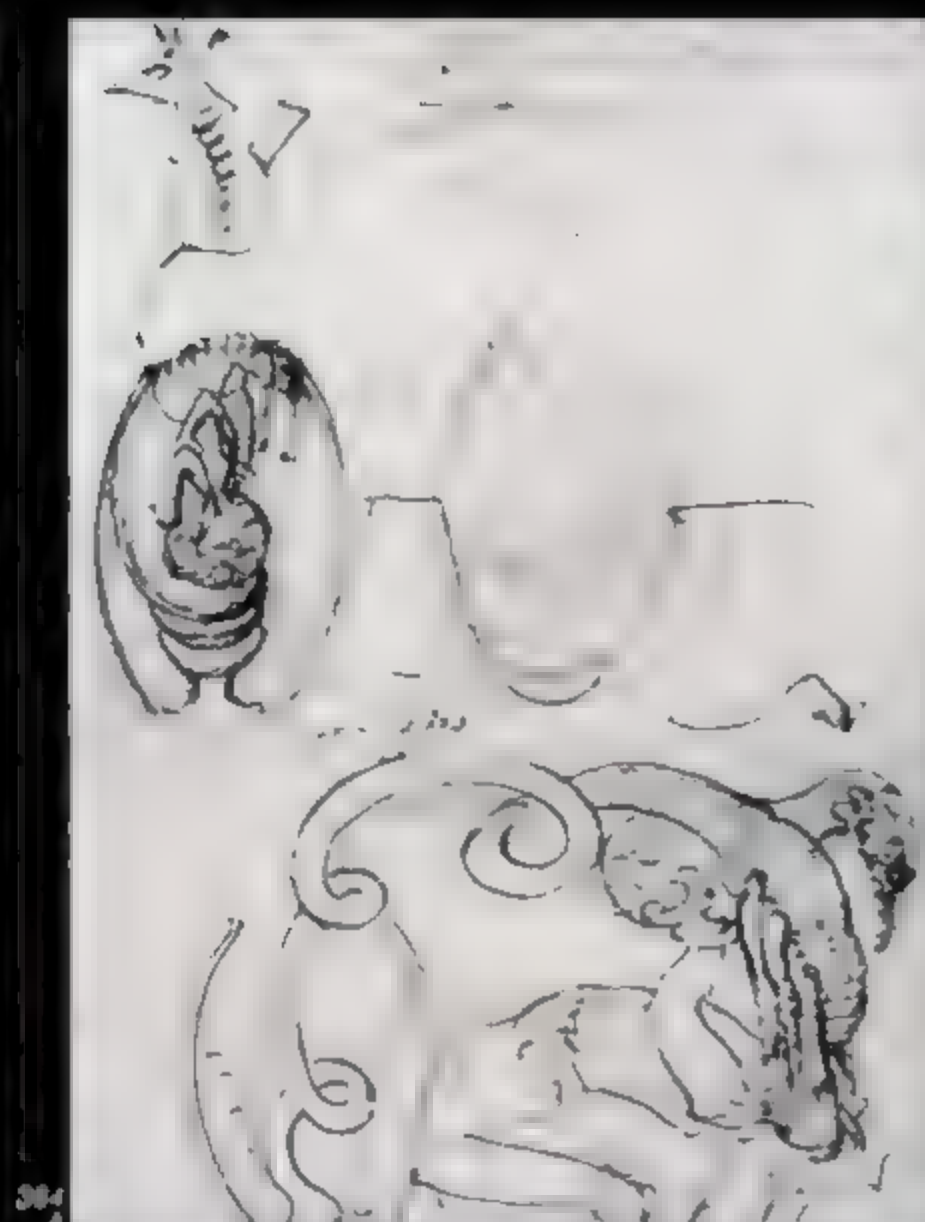
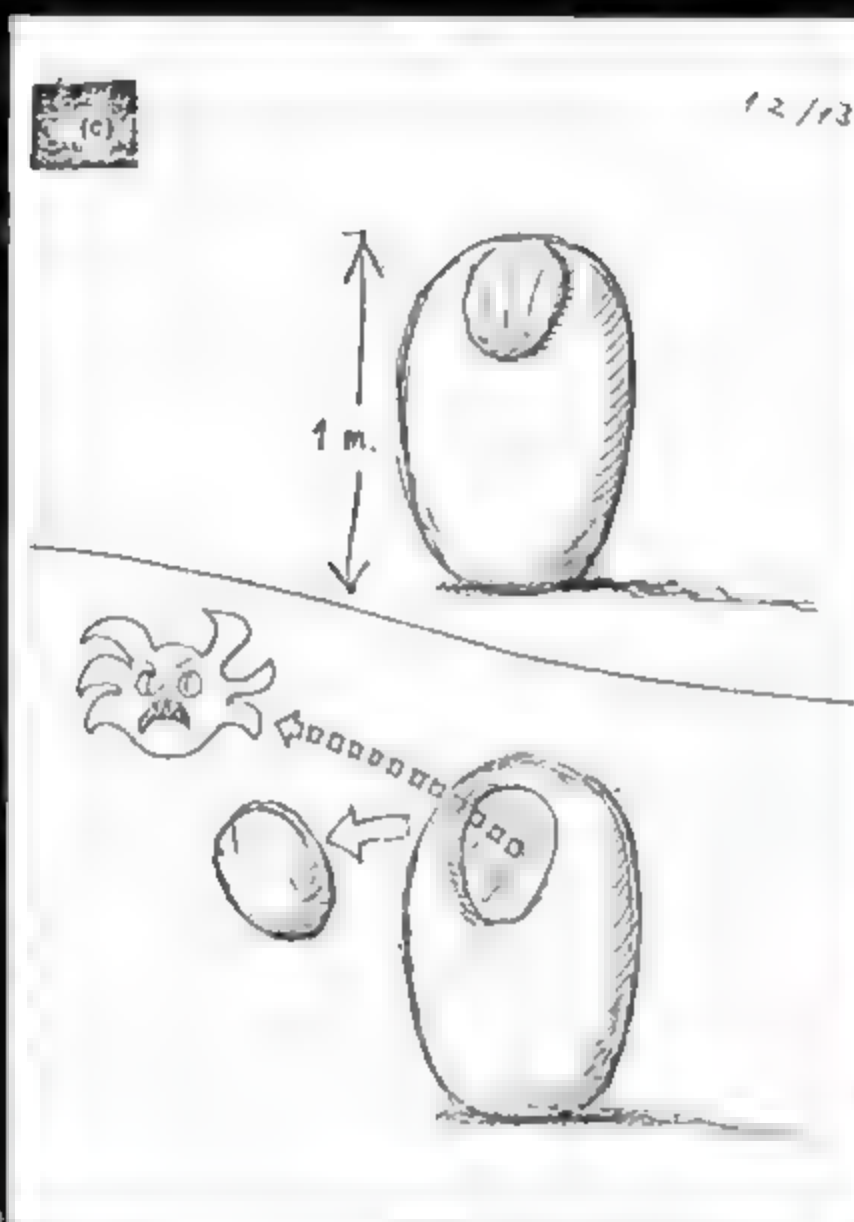
O'BANNON'S
ALIEN C1
MR. GIGER 77

11 July 1977 O'Bannon's letter has arrived. One version in German and one in English. Also some explanatory sketches by Ron Cobb (who had also been working with Jodorowsky) and by O'Bannon himself. The cheque for the promised thousand dollars has also arrived. Now I really must get down to work.

The story tells of spore-capsules (eggs) inside a pyramid. That gives me the idea of using the Swiss egg-box for the basic structure of the pyramid (plate 363c). The eggs themselves, which according to O'Bannon's sketch (plate 363d) contain the first nucleus of the *Alien*, the Facehugger, will consequently also be inside the pyramid, in the egg-silo (plate 363b).

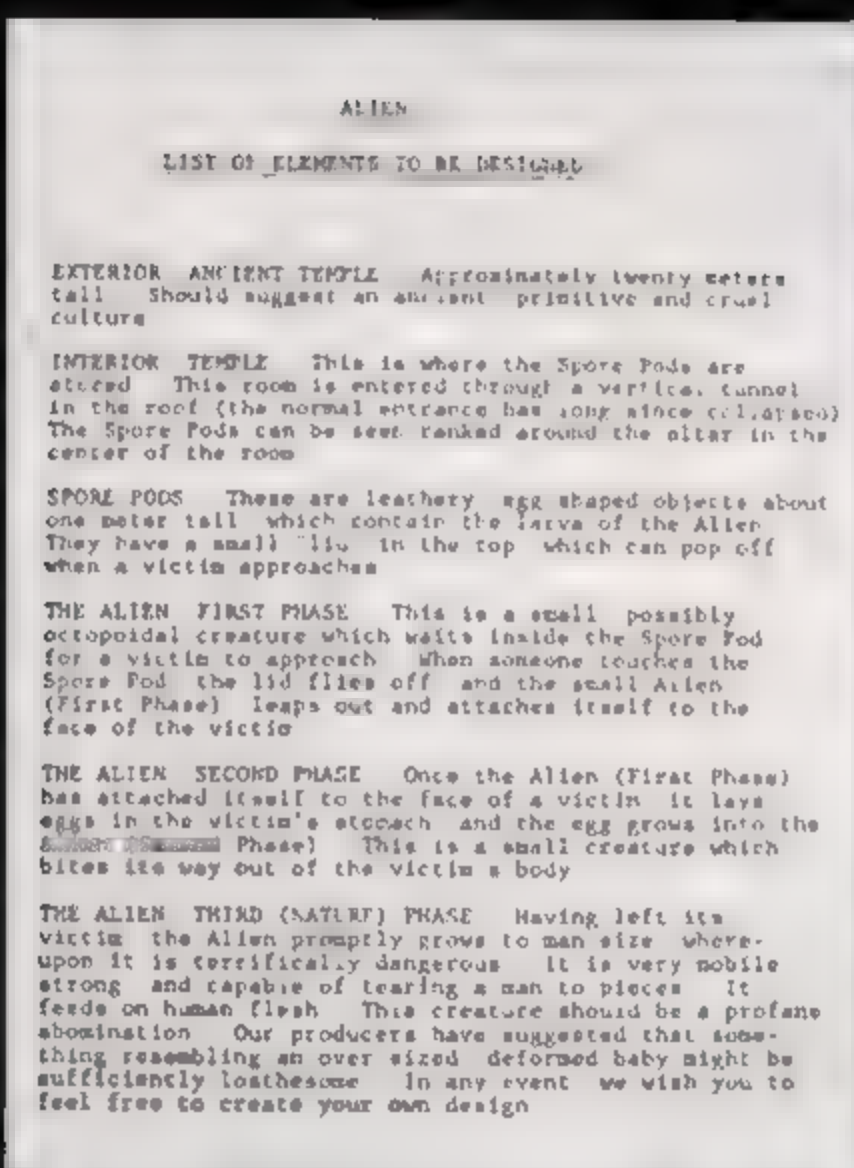
Plates 364a and 365a show the first sketches, as *Alien I*, the Facehugger, jumps out of the egg. In a good design the function of the object ought to be clearly visible, so I give the Facehugger a tail to be used as a spring for taking off (like the tail on the jumping devil toy, plate 364a, top left). The Facehugger, which clings to the face of its victims, gets spidery fingers on both sides (plates 363/364/365).

Once it gets its claws in, the Facehugger sinks its tube-like proboscis into the throat of the victim to deposit its embryos. Plate 364 shows how it uses a pincer-like mechanism to force open the mouth. Plate 365, a variant, shows the sack in which the embryos are formed.



These are my proposals for the job they have given me. I have transparencies made of the pictures, sketches and models, send them to O'Bannon, and wait.

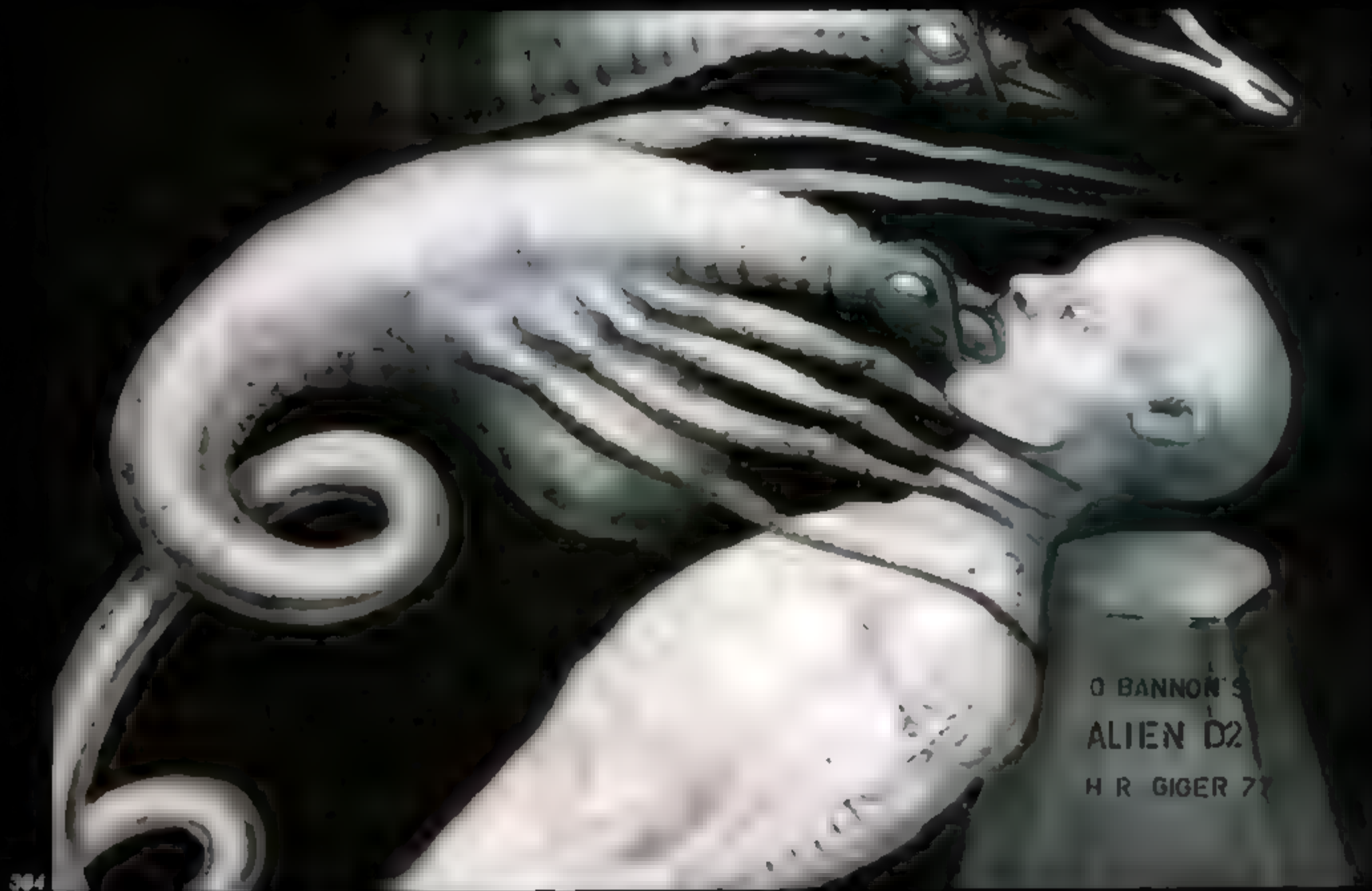
Still no answer from Hollywood. My book *H. R. Giger's Necronomicon* (in the French version) has just been published. I send O'Bannon the first copy, the ink still wet from the printers.



Ron Shusett and Dan O'Bannon.

363d: Sketch by Dan O'Bannon, egg with Facehugger
363e: Extract from letter from Dan O'Bannon

364a: Sketch by H.R. Giger, egg with Facehugger
365a: Sketch by H.R. Giger, Facehugger
364: Alien I (Facehugger), version I, 70 x 100 cm
365: Alien I (Facehugger), version II, 70 x 100 cm



October 1977, Zürich O'Bannon telephones. He has received the backing. He is tremendously enthusiastic. The idea of the eggs appeals to him particularly. I wait again.

At last, in February 1978, in the middle of the night, I get the telephone call that I'd almost given up believing in. They seem to be celebrating in Los Angeles. O'Bannon tells me excitedly that Twentieth Century Fox have accepted the film project; they are putting in seven million dollars and will be engaging me for the designs. He says my book *H. R. Giger's Necronomicon* has completely convinced the production company and the director, Ridley Scott, and I should expect a visit from them soon.

On 8 February 1978 they turn up, as announced – the three 'greats'. The embassy from the fantastic kingdom of films consists of Gordon Carroll, Ridley Scott and David Giler. Scott carries out the introductions and then gets going. He tells the story of *Alien* over again with the aid of sketches, goes into more detail and tells me about the first changes. We shan't have much time, he says; shooting will be starting in three and a half months time, the studios are reserved and the dates must be stuck to strictly, since the premiere has already been announced for May 1979. The most important thing of all is *Alien III*, the superstar, the great monster – the creature by which the film lives and almost the whole of the cast dies. The film is to be shot in Shepperton Studios in England.



Preparations have already begun in the offices of Scott Free Productions in Lexington Street. (Before his first production, *The Duellists*, Scott had produced advertising films with his brother.) I am told I must negotiate my fee with Twentieth Century Fox.

All this tumbles over me, and Scott talks so fast that I'm afraid I shall only understand half of what he says. Even during lunch the torrent of words never

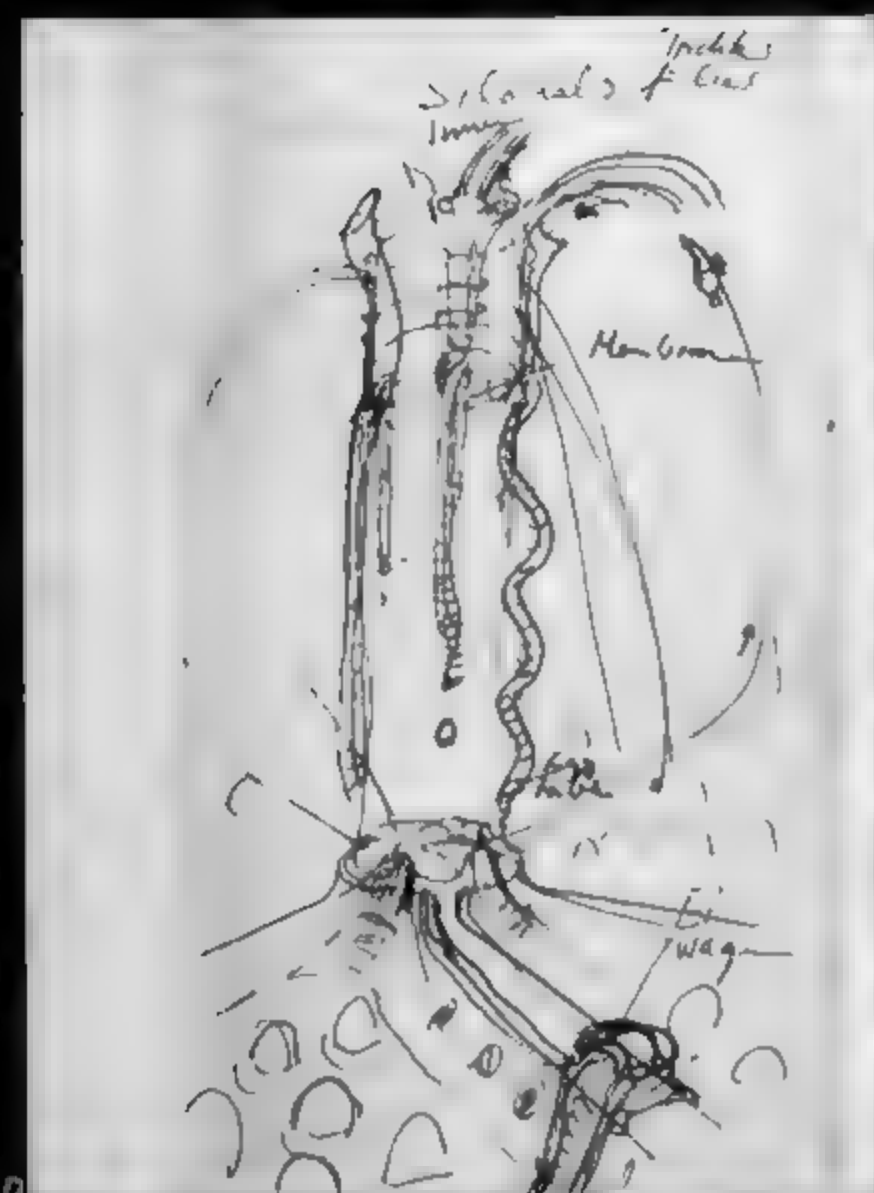
stops. After I've taken the three of them to the airport in the evening and am alone again, my head is still buzzing.

I'm absolutely exhausted, and a bit worried too that in these circumstances I may not become creative in time.

14 February 1978 Zürich to London by air, first class. A liveried chauffeur from Twentieth Century Fox meets me at the airport and takes me straight to the Hyde Park Hotel. With my black leather suitcase in one hand and a plastic brief-case in the other, I feel very out of place in this famous hotel. The commissionaires stare at me as if they thought I'd got the hotel mixed up with a museum. However, as soon as I utter the magic words 'Twentieth Century Fox' they whisk me up to a huge bedroom. Then I'm taken off to Lexington Street, where Scott and his colleagues are already waiting for me. They have got an interpreter specially for me. Unfortunately he is no more familiar with technical terms like 'aeronautics' than I am, so there's no point in his staying with us very long. My future colleagues are introduced to me: John Mollo, who has made the astronauts' clothing from designs by Moebius; Les Dilley, an art director who got an Oscar for his work on *Star Wars*; Michael Seymour, the production designer, who has already prepared plans and papier-mâché models of the space-ship *Nostramo* from Ron Cobb's designs, and finally Peter Beale, one of Twentieth Century Fox's European Production Executives. He has already heard from my lawyer and doesn't seem to be at all happy about the fee that I've asked. I try to explain to him that the star role, for which immense salaries are paid in other films, will be going this time to *Alien III*. The film is going to stand or fall by the quality of this monster. I tell him too that my work is very meticulous, and very important, and that I have to be paid accordingly.

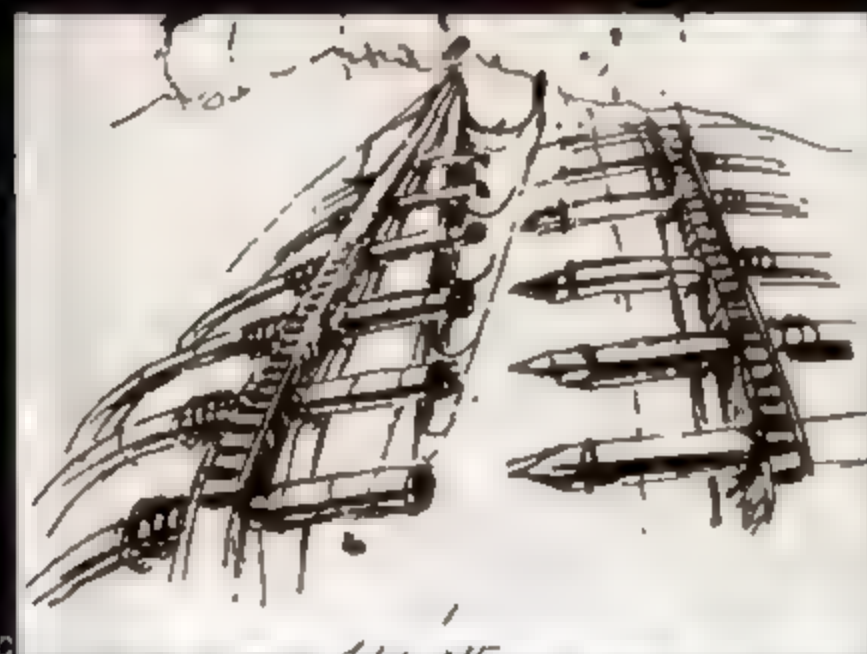
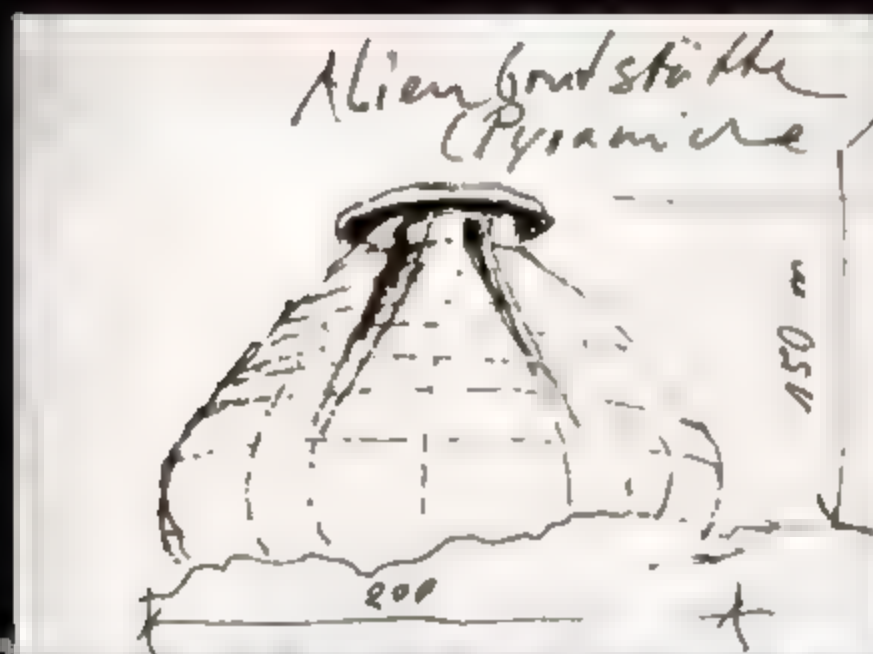
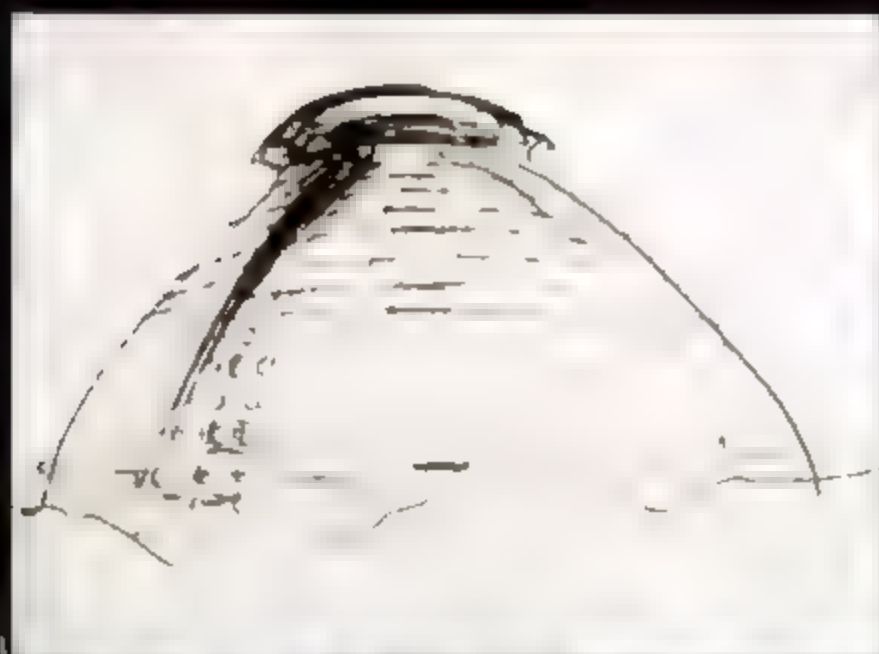
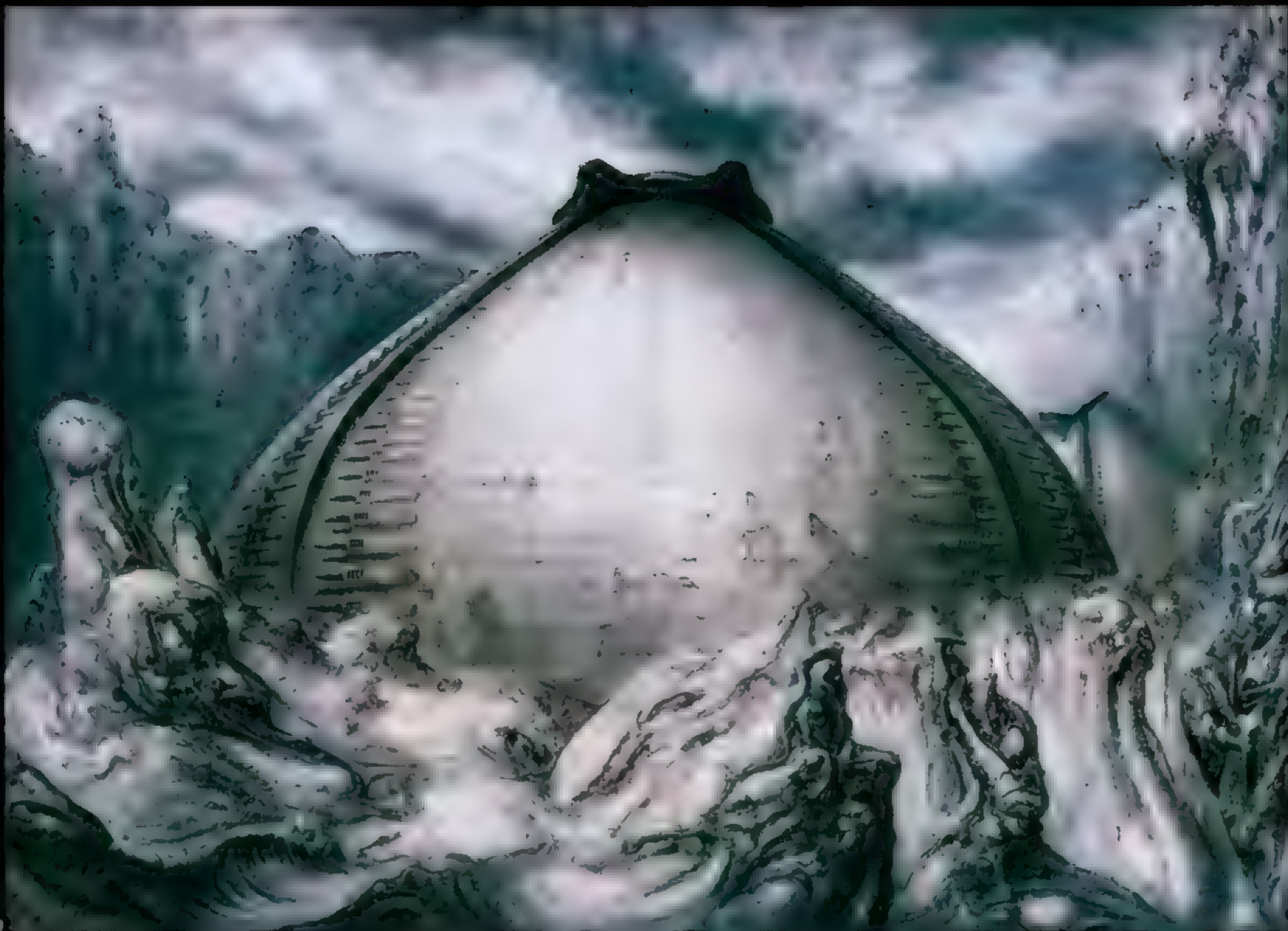
Beale doesn't seem to take in my arguments at all. It's not until Carroll explains to him, in a discussion that lasts three hours, that I'm simply not prepared to accept the salary that would be paid to a high-grade secretary in Switzerland, we finally compromise. I am engaged. But I still don't sign the contract, because there are some points in it about second rights that need clarification. Scott now explains what is needed urgently before my next visit, and then they let me go.

30 March 1978 I am driven to Shepperton Studios by the chauffeur, the signed contract in my pocket. It had been made clear to me that I must accept their terms or stay at home. Meanwhile the production team has grown to about 150 people, and more freelances were currently being taken on. Only the best people in the film industry – so they tell me. There are three big films being shot at Shepperton.



H.R. Giger, Ridley Scott and Gordon Carroll

378d: Sketch of egg-silo interior
378e: Sketch of egg-silo interior
378: Egg-silo exterior, 100 x 140 cm
378a-c: Sketches of egg-silo exterior



Sound Stages A, B, C, D and H have been booked for *Alien*. Seymour takes charge of me and shows me the various workshops. In Sound Stage C they are already building the first sets of the interior of the space-ship *Nostromo* to designs by Ron Cobb. Cobb has actually been at work here with O'Bannon for a couple of weeks.

The designs I've brought with me meet with general approval. The egg-silo (plate 378) can't be built because it would be too expensive. Pity! Also, they want the eggs containing the Facehuggers to be made organically, like a sort of vagina. Scott makes my task easy, illustrating what he has in mind all the time with the help of my book *H. R. Giger's Necronomicon*. That saves me copying strange designs.

5 April, Zürich I am temporarily paid off. Just a week after signing the contract. Without my signed contract Twentieth Century Fox would not have been in a position to carry out the décor according to my designs. I have made all the necessary drawings, so now they don't need me any more. I am wretched and angry; however, I know they will still need me when they get round to interpreting my designs in three dimensions. In order to lose no time, I go on working and start on the design of the hieroglyphics.

24 April, Zürich I send transparencies of my new work to Twentieth Century Fox, as arranged.

2 May, Zürich Telephone call from Carroll. He is enthusiastic about the pictures. He thinks they get better and better.

14 May, Zürich Another call from Carroll, telling me that I've been re-appointed. I am to go to Shepperton as soon as possible and start work on the scenery models for *Alien*.

25 May, Shepperton Studios In the studios the sets, as the scenes are called, are slowly taking shape. The *Alien* scenery is to be built on the stage in Sound Stage H, one of the biggest in Europe, where the big scenes in *Star Wars* and *Superman* were shot. When the production of *Alien* is completed, this great sound stage, sixty by a hundred metres, is to be demolished and a housing estate put up.

They have already started modelling the scenery, and I'm appalled by it; it isn't in the least like what I had designed. Seeing how upset I am, they ask me if I'd prefer to build the models myself.

It's clear to me that, unless I do, it won't go the way I want it, so I take the work over. I ask them to obtain as many different bones as possible, and a supply of plasticine, before my next visit. With this request I leave London on the same day and fly back to Zürich.



22 May, Zürich Call from Shepperton. The materials I had asked for are all ready and a hotel room has been booked for me for Thursday. All this makes it clear that they are waiting for me with confidence.

Above: H.R. Giger at work
Below: Mia Bonzanigo with Frau Melly Giger

384: Hieroglyphics, 200 x 140 cm



LANDSCAPE

22 May, Shepperton Staying in Warren Lodge Hotel. They have given me the best room, with a huge balcony and a view over the Thames. There are always a lot of boats on the river, since there is a sailing club on an island nearby. The pop group The Who stayed here a few years ago, as you can tell from the golden disc dedicated to the proprietor, Mr Gordon. I'm crazy about my new pad, and immediately ring up Mia, my girl-friend in Zürich, and ask her to come over as soon as possible. We're thinking of taking some photographs and making a documentary film about *Allen*.

26 May, Shepperton Studios My new colleague, Peter Voysey, is introduced to me. He is said to be one of the best and most sought-after modellers in the film business.

In Sound Stage H we start on a model of the landscape to a scale of 1:2. The bones are all ready for us; they are sawn up, stuck together with plasticine and all mixed up with tubes, cables and bits of machinery (plates 385 a-c). We make good progress, not least because Voysey is able to carry out the work just as I envisage it. There are stage carpenters and joiners all round us putting up foundations for the scenery according to the old, wrong models. In some astonishment I try to find out what is the object of this, and the production designer, Seymour, enlightens me. It would, he tells me, be bad for the workers' morale if they were stopped in the middle of a job. They have to be kept busy until the new landscape models are ready to be built, or else they will never be able to get anything done. When I ask him what will happen to the old scenery, he just says: 'Scrapped.' An odd way of economizing in a place where you're continually hearing the motto, 'Time is money'. If they hadn't kept me on ice in Zürich for a month, they really would have been able to live up to that motto.



385d: Landscape with astronauts (actual scene)
385e: Landscape with astronauts (actual scene)

385: Landscape, 70 x 100 cm
385a + b: Models from bones, plasticine and tubes.
385c: Model painted with astronaut.





27 May 1978, Shepperton Mia has arrived. She's just as keen on the hotel and its surroundings as I am. We are particularly struck by the King's Head pub, run by the jolly Cameron family with Penny as the charming landlady. In the little pub garden, over Spanish white wine, I give Mia a crash course in photography.

28 May 1978, Shepperton It's just past midnight. Mia is asleep. I am restless and nervous. Tomorrow, Monday, is a bank holiday. I'm so involved in the work ahead of me that I'd much rather go back to work. If I stop and work here for a few weeks, I believe I can rescue a great part of my designs.

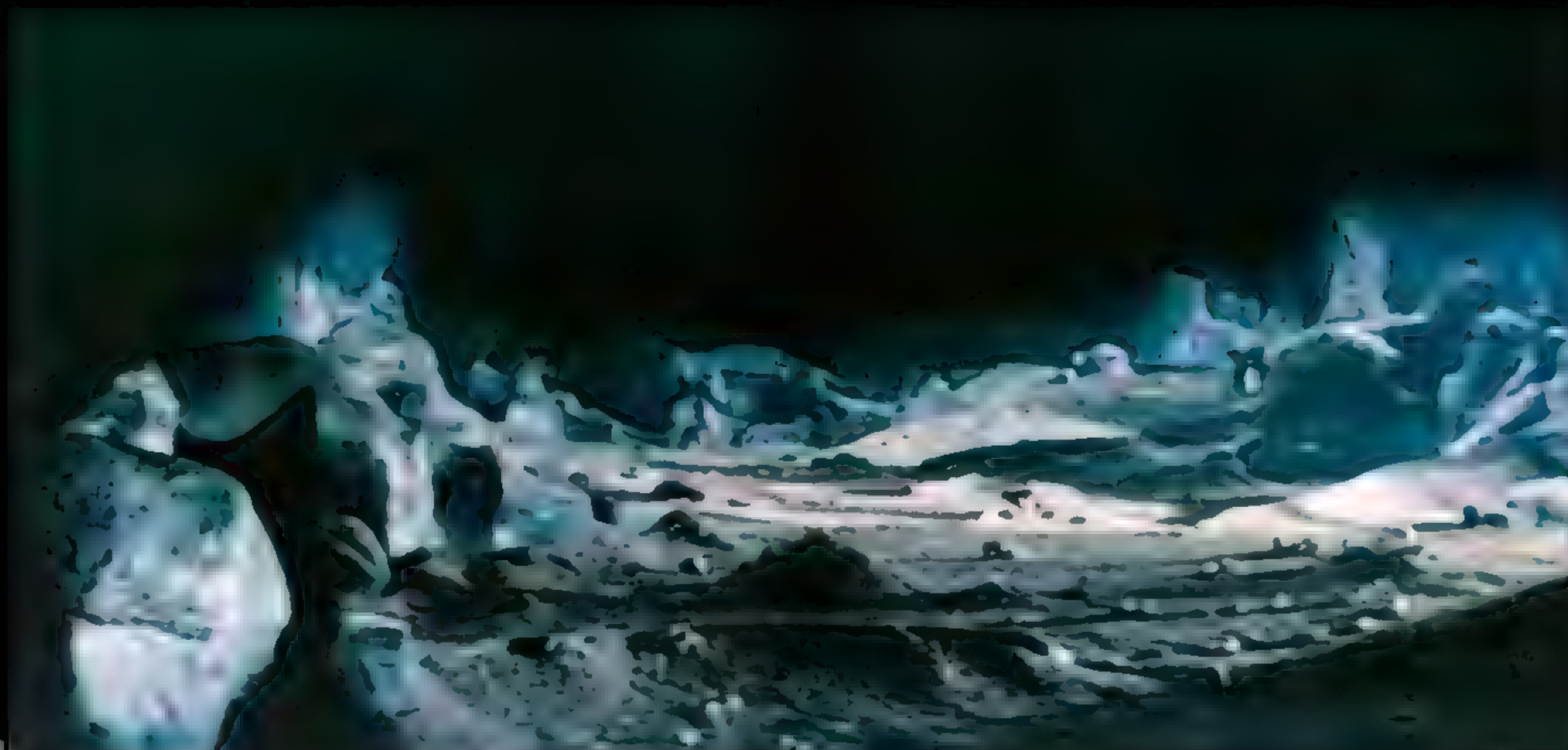
30 May 1978, Shepperton Studios As I am modelling on the stage in Sound Stage H with Mia and Voysey, a group of important-looking people come up, led by Scott and Carroll. These gentlemen are introduced to me. They all want to shake hands in the continental style – in England you don't shake hands with people much – but I have to refuse because my hands are filthy; so we content ourselves with bowing to one another stiffly, like Germans, which must look a bit comic. One gentleman with a beard says: 'Ah, you're Giger!' He says it in a way that leaves me in some doubt whether he's delighted with my work or angry about the business of my contract.



Stage H

395: Nostromo after landing
395a: Landscape

395b: Landscape (actual scene)
395c: Landscape (actual scene) with mat paint



31 May 1978, Shepperton Studios So far, so good. The first bone-models are ready to be cast in liquid rubber in the plasterers' workshop. Plaster of Paris is poured into the rubber moulds when they're firm, and later, when the plaster is set, the model rocks are sawn up into slices of equal thickness (plate 385g). These slices, reproducing the exact outline of the rocks, are built up full size in wood and fitted together (plate f). The frames are covered with wire netting (plate h). Complicated shapes are cut from styrofoam and put in position (plate i). The whole thing is then covered with jute impregnated with plaster of Paris and the structure is gone over with a mason's trowel. The tubes are placed so as to be



completely integrated in the landscape (plate 1). Background painting is carried out by the scenic artist, Ken Hill, and his team. Working at dizzy heights, they paint the great stage walls with brushes and spray guns. Hill lets me into some little professional secrets; among other things he tells me that it's important to have a dark base, since on a light base the whole thing will look artificial. Why this should be he couldn't explain.

Lunch-time again. Our little group, the 'Monster Department' as they call us, goes off to lunch at the King's Head. Seymour is always trying to get some means of transport for us. It is all the greatest fun. Penny spoils us so much with the artistry of her cooking that I've put on 20 lbs in five months.



Les Dille and Derek Venint

385f: Ground structure for rocks
385g: Plaster model after slicing

385h: Ground structure with grating
385i: Rock peaks in Styropor
385k: Rocks with jute-plaster coating
385l: Workers fitting the pipes
385m: Mountains, final stage



DERELICT EXTERIOR

5 March 1978, London In Scott's office in Lexington Street I outline my ideas for the derelict (plate 374). The derelict is a space-ship built by non-humans, which the three astronauts come across on the stage planet. Scott thinks it's absolutely great. O'Bannon, who has just flown over from the USA, doesn't think it's technical enough. A battle of pros and cons begins. I keep quiet; I know that Scott will win the argument. I did the picture early one morning when I couldn't get back to sleep. I was staying in a flat in Old Church Street in London at the time.

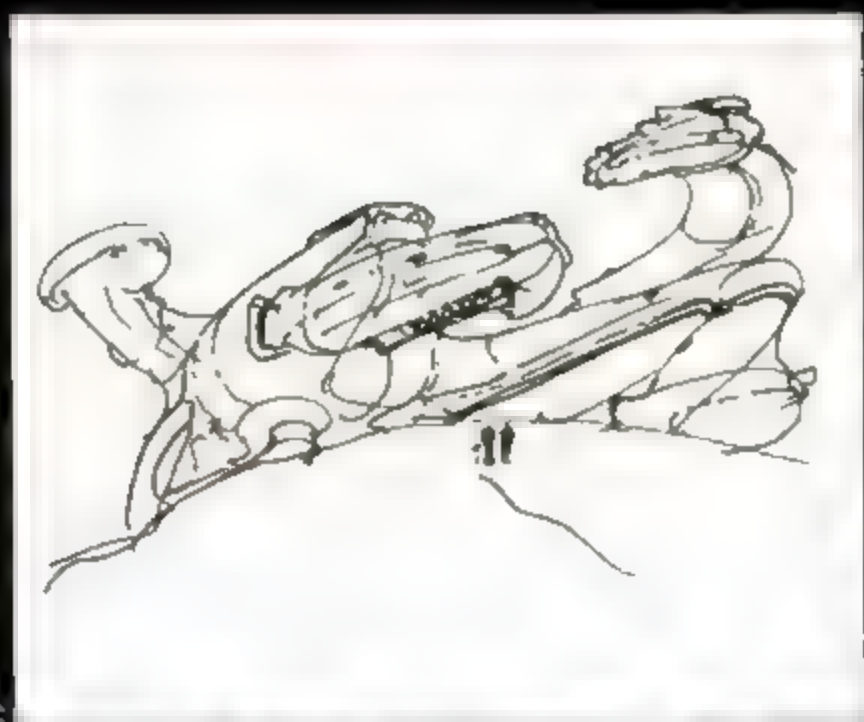
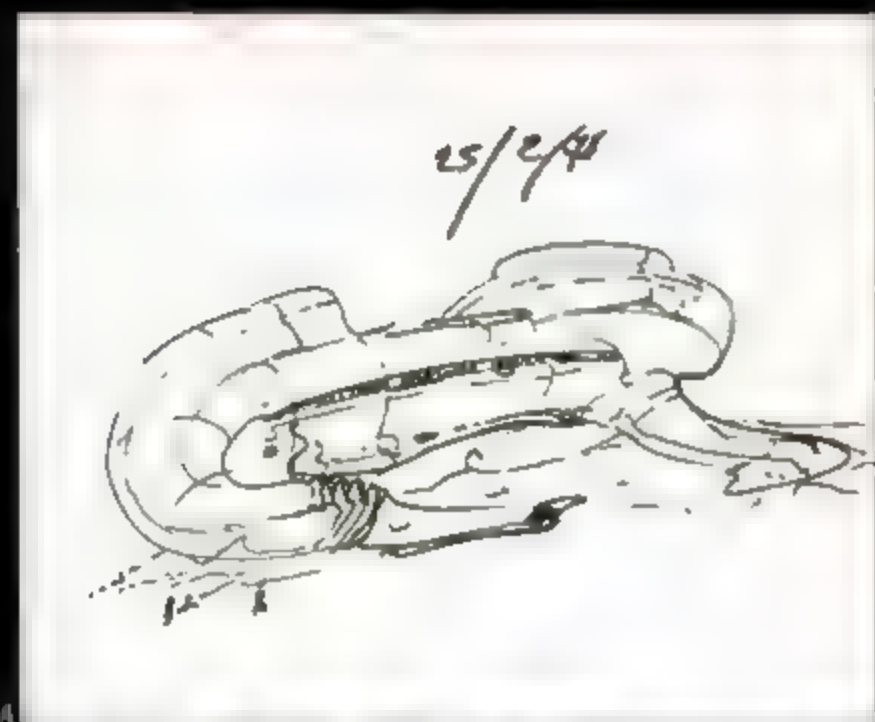
This derelict is not strictly in my field of work. But I had this idea and simply had to get it down. By the time Mia gets up I have finished the picture. I always get a good feeling when pictures go so easily, and, looking back, I'm not often disappointed with my work. The certainty that my ideas will be adopted and that Scott can interpret them allows me to keep quiet. The war of words comes to an end and Scott asks me to paint a picture of the entrance passage. The battle is won.

16 March, Zürich I've had a longish talk with my lawyer about my contract, and an hour and a half's telephone conversation with Beale, a production executive of Twentieth Century Fox. It seems all clear for the time being. I've made my concession, and done two extra pictures for my *Alien* designs. I've finished the entrance passage (plate 375) as well as a view of the derelict showing the glass dome above the cockpit (plate 382).



374d: Model landscape with wreck for original scene
374e: Model landscape with wreck for original scene

374: Wreck, 70 x 100 cm
374a-c: Sketches for wreck



18 June 1978, Shepperton Studios A friend of mine, a film-maker from Basel, J. J. Wittmer, has arrived and brought my 16-mm camera. Only a few people are working today, though of course we are. Pressure of work forces us to ignore the traditional rest-days. As usual, this day starts at 8.30 and ends between seven and eight in the evening. I'm constantly worried that I shan't be able to get my work ready in time.

Mia and J. J. Wittmer are filming me at work. At last I've got time to start on the plasticine model of the derelict, which Brian Johnson, a supervisor of 'special effects', has been waiting for for a long time. Johnson's headquarters are at Bray Studios, where the special effects shots will be filmed with the aid of models.

19 July 1978, Shepperton Studios They ask me to go to the office, where Scott, Seymour and Carroll are waiting for me. Carroll says, please will I design another derelict. The entrance passage and the landscape can stay the same as those that have been built in Sound Stage H, but the rest will have to be changed. As it is now (plate 378) it is too reminiscent of a bone and might make people think it was an organic part of the landscape. There will also be technical difficulties in building it. I am absolutely astounded to hear this from Carroll, of all people, who had been so enthusiastic about my derelict when he first saw it. I suspect that Shusett and O'Bannon are behind it. Even good friends can often infuriate one. I try to convince Carroll that the dimensions and the aerodynamic shape are enough in themselves to distinguish the derelict from the landscape, and moreover that technical details ought not to be too obvious in case they spoil the biomechanical character of a space-ship built by non-humans. I simply can't see how I can improve on it; I regard it as one of my best pictures. Carroll proves unyielding and finally practically orders me to conjure up something else out of the ground. They seem to think I can just shake good ideas out of my sleeve – the bitter fate of the creative artist. Scott keeps quiet during the discussion, and in silent opposition demonstrates a quite ordinary, banal crashed aircraft, its tail fin pointing skyward. I understand and, promising to try something different, go back to my work. This is an occasion when time will work for me.

3 August 1978, Shepperton Studios Next day, O'Bannon flies back to America. Mia films him as a souvenir.



C



D



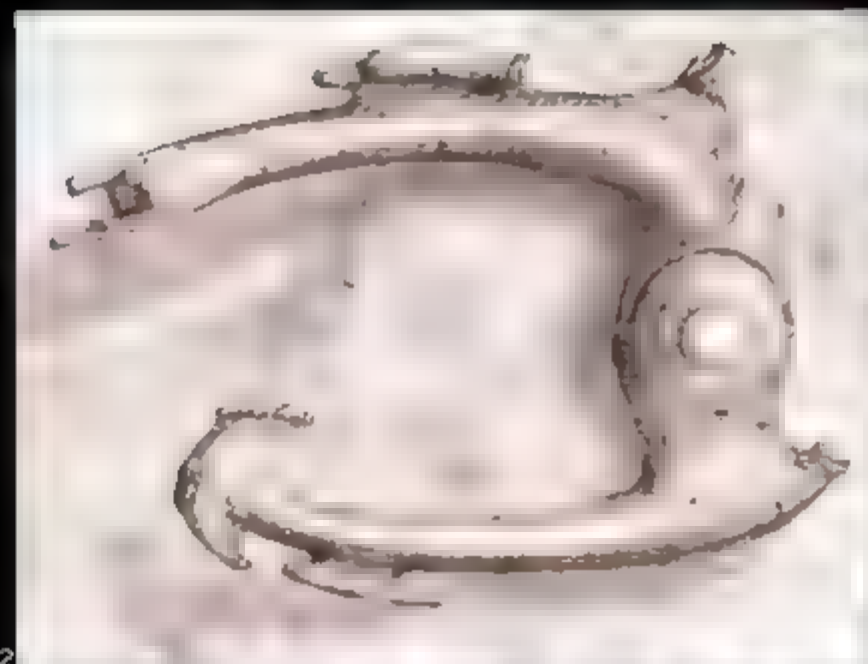
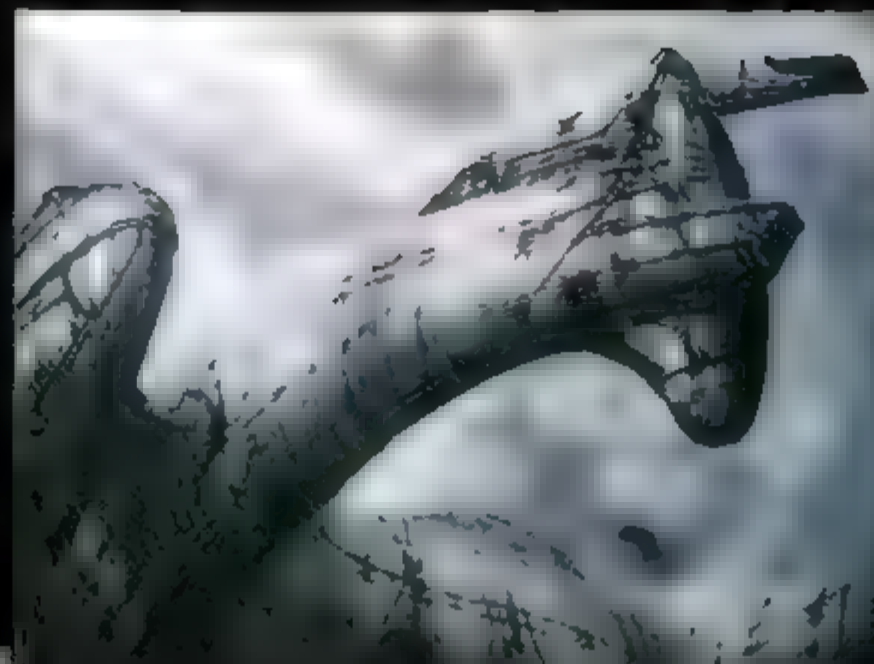
E

396c: Styrofoam nucleus for wreck model
396d + e: Model wreck details with construction

395-396b: Wreck detail, 100 x 140 cm
396a: Plasticine model of Alien wreck.
382: Wreck inspection, 70 x 100 cm

ALIEN

HR Giger 78



20 September 1978, Bray Studios Seymour drives me to Bray Studios, where the special effects group works. In the middle of the great hall is my tried and trusty derelict, or at any rate the framework of it, with a nucleus of steel tubes. The whole surface is covered with netting (plate 396c). Dick Budden, one of the modellers, has built it up, and now Voysey has to cover it with a coat of plasticine and fit it out with cables and technical accessories. I'm delighted with the way they have done the job, built up from my plasticine models; I say so to the group, and they seem very pleased. Extraordinary – suddenly they are working from my designs. Has O'Bannon's departure got something to do with it? As always, there simply wasn't time to make any other design.

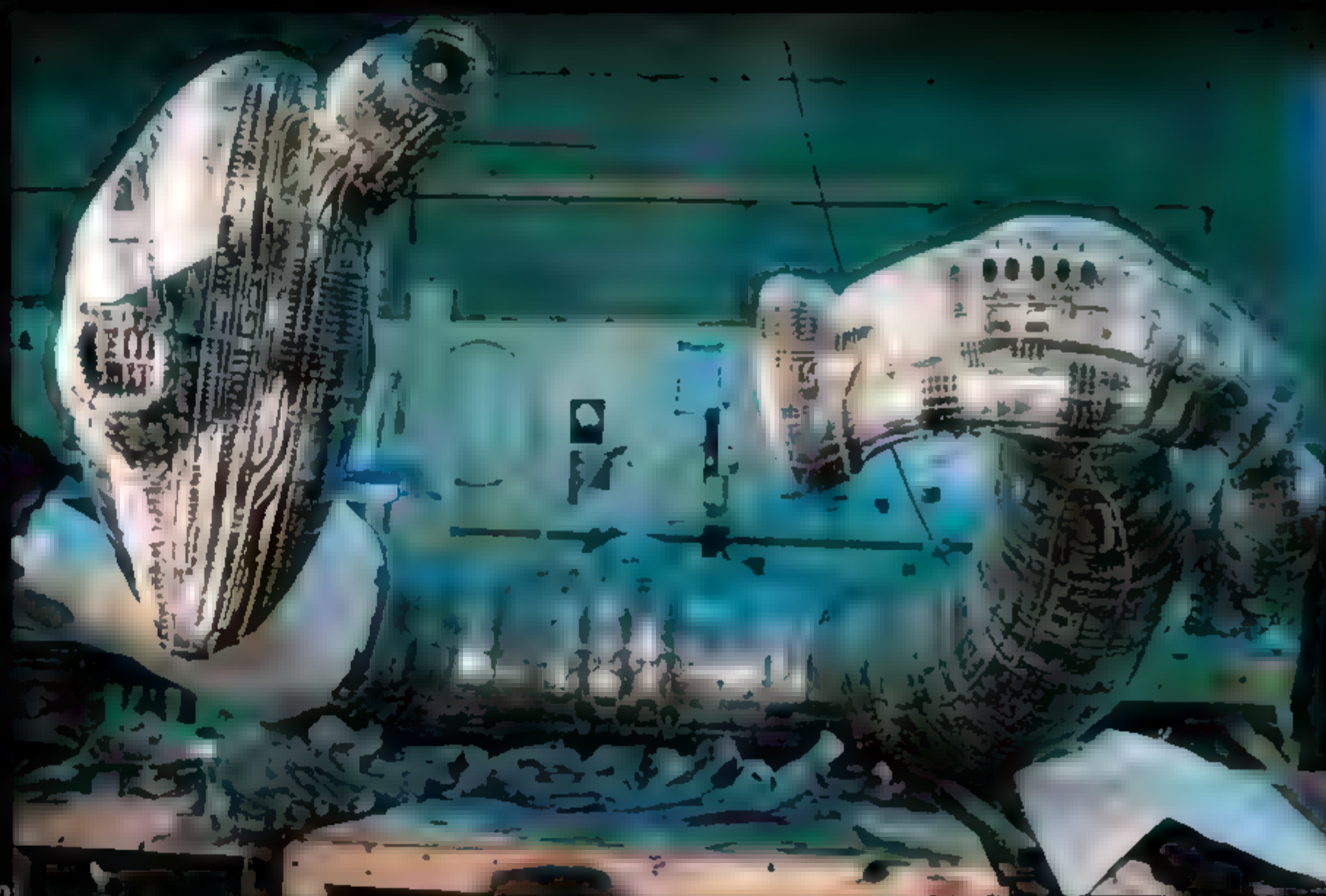
I've already started on the major details of the derelict in my studio at Shepperton, as a guide for Voysey when he comes to build it.

10 October 1978, Shepperton Studios Today I've again got something to hand over, and the landscape with the derelict is finished (plate 397). Peter Voysey receives his plans for the film model of the derelict, and the matte artist (see page 26) gets his detail for the entrance passage. I feel much happier.

22 November 1978 Zürich to London by air. Mia, J. J. Wittmer and I are on the way to Bray Studios. We've got something on: we're going to take the last missing shots for our documentary and to record interviews with Scott and Voysey. Complete with tape-recorder and film camera plus all the accessories, we are back again among our colleagues of the past months. The big scenes at Shepperton have all been shot and the last remaining close-ups and model shots are now being completed at Bray. Voysey has been busy for over a month with the covering of the derelict, a job calling for a lot of patience and a lot of skill. He makes such a perfect job of it that it exceeds my wildest dreams.



Nick Alder of Special Effects



397d-f: Wreck details with construction



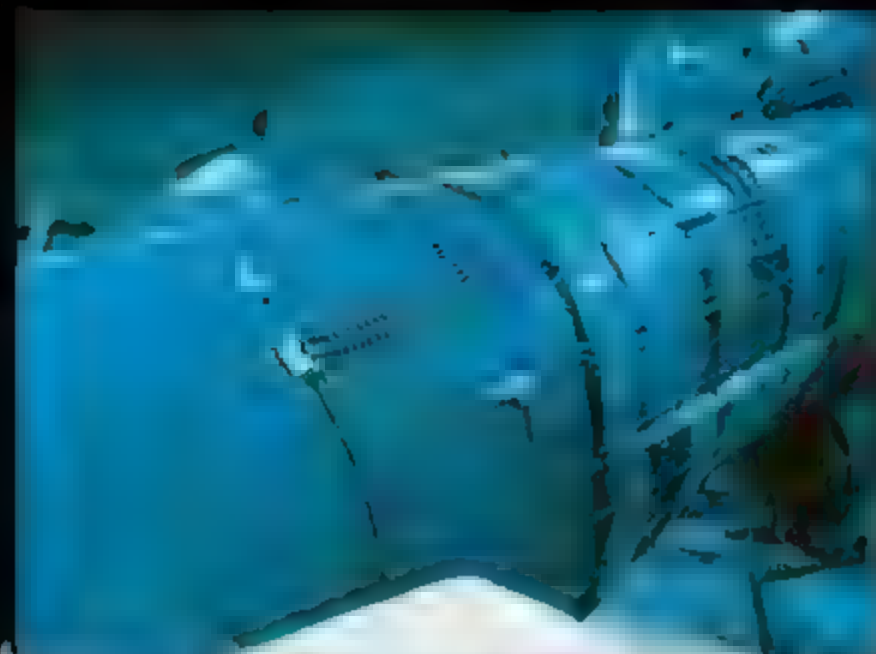
397: Landscape with wreck, 70 x 100 cm
397a-c: Wreck details with construction



ALIEN

HR. Giger

307



DERELICT ENTRANCE

30 March 1978, Shepperton Studios The new set is discussed in Sound Stage H. Scott and his close collaborators stand around the model and discuss it with great seriousness. The scene looks like a group of senior officers being briefed round a sand-table. Mountains are shifted, moved here and there, the astronauts' routes and the landing of the space-craft *Nostromo* are plotted and different camera angles are tried out.

One leg of the *Nostromo*'s landing-gear and the entrance-passage — two oval holes, of which Voysey has already made a model to 1/25 scale — are the most important requisites for the scene and, like the bone-rocks, have to be made full size. I had always thought that scenes of this kind were all done with trick photography and models; I was astonished to find that it wasn't so. To save expense, two sets are built in one; first the bony rocks are filmed, then the entrance to the derelict. It seems that, when you use a wide-angle lens, you get the problem that, while the entrance is in the picture, there is nothing but deep black on either side. This is where the matte artist comes in; it's his job to fill in the missing bits, following my designs, using an air brush on a glass plate placed in front of the camera (plate page 19). What is so demanding about this tricky task is that the real scenery must join up with the painted scenes without any obvious junction. For the actor it means that he must never step over certain clearly defined limits. Plate 369a shows the real scenery with the unwanted details blacked out on the camera aperture. Plate 369b illustrates the real scenery with the paintings copied on the glass plate, showing how they give the complete impression of my design. During this scene the entrance passage is completely covered with a black curtain; the rocks are moved about so as to give an entirely new aspect of the landscape.

In this scene too they work in the same way. Here again the matte artist has to widen the picture being filmed. On pages 18-19, in plate 365, you can see a photo I have retouched as a model for the matte artist. Plate 365a shows the original filmed scene and plate 365b is the final result after the painted sections have been added.

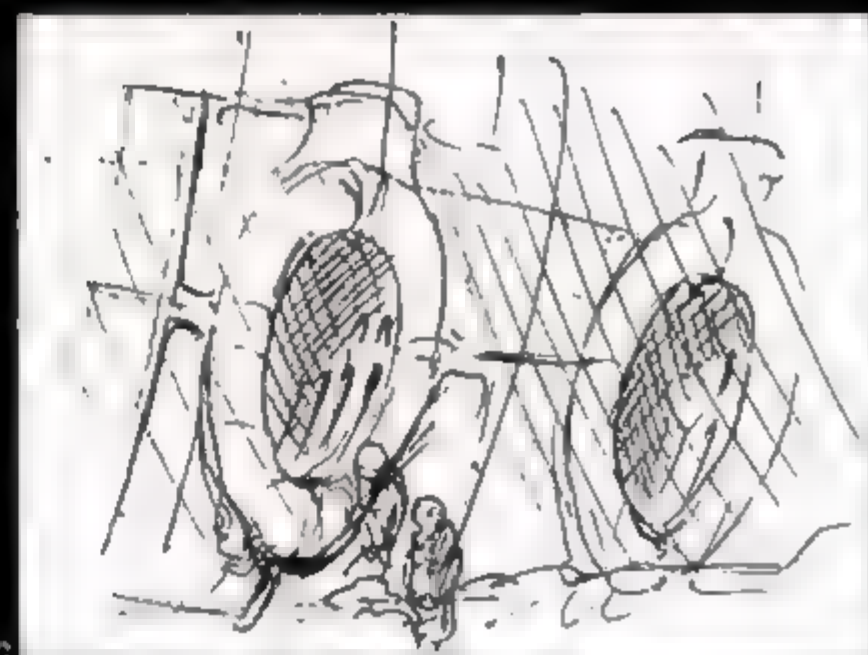
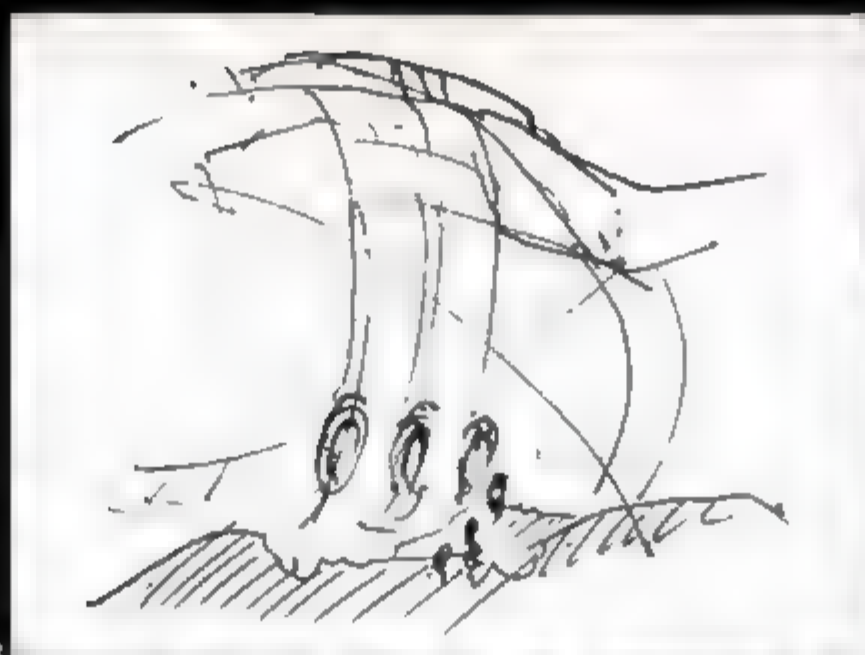
31 May 1978, Shepperton Studios While we're still working on the model of the bone-rocks, work begins at the back of Stage H on fitting out the entrance to the derelict — a job for which Les Dilley, the art director, has worked out precise plans and



375d + e: Wreck entrance (actual scene)

375: Wreck entrance passage, 70 x 100 cm

375a-c: Sketches for wreck entrance



which is now being carried out under the guidance of Bill Welch, head of construction (plate 389c).

1 April 1978, Shepperton Studios A small shed has been rigged up for me on Stage B to use as a studio.

8 June 1978, Shepperton Studios Sandy Malloy, Scott's secretary, asks me if I can accept the cost of the picture-frames for protecting my pictures, because there is no provision for them in the budget. I don't see why I should pay for frames which in any case I can never take back to Switzerland, and suggest that they use the difference between a first-class flight and an economy flight between Zürich and London, multiplied a number of times. I did actually fly first-class on my first visit to London, as agreed, but after that I travelled just like everybody else. Apparently no one expected me to have such a head for business, and I see astonished faces all round me; only the secretary laughs as if it was a good joke.

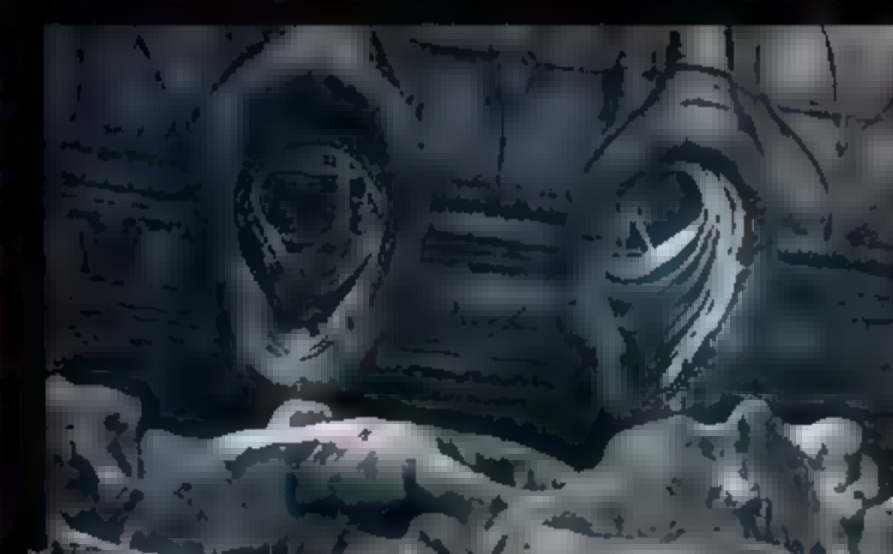
Stage H

The work on the entrance passage is getting on well (plate 389d). Voysey cuts the oval entrances bulges out of styrofoam. The result looks like a pair of gigantic sun-glasses and might have come from the American pop artist Oldenburg.

15 July 1978, Shepperton Studios The wooden structure is finished (plate 389e, side view, plate 389f, top view from behind). The styrofoam ovals are hauled up and fastened on the wooden frames with jute impregnated with plaster of Paris. In the plasterers' workshop Voysey is modelling the outside covering elements. For these surfaces he uses clay instead of plasticine. A rubber mould is prepared from it, which is filled and emptied enough times to make sufficient elements to cover the whole outer surface of the derelict except for the entrances. To give the observer the impression of wind, storms and rotting away, cork chips of a sort are mixed with the plaster, making the normally flat surface of a plaster cast look corroded.

21 July 1978, Shepperton Studios The rocks and the derelict are painted. Even I am astonished to see what a difference paint can make. Gradually this artificial landscape begins to look real. Sand is spread between the rocks, and the film crew decide to take some test shots – test shots which don't satisfy Scott, however, as, with some justification, I am not told.

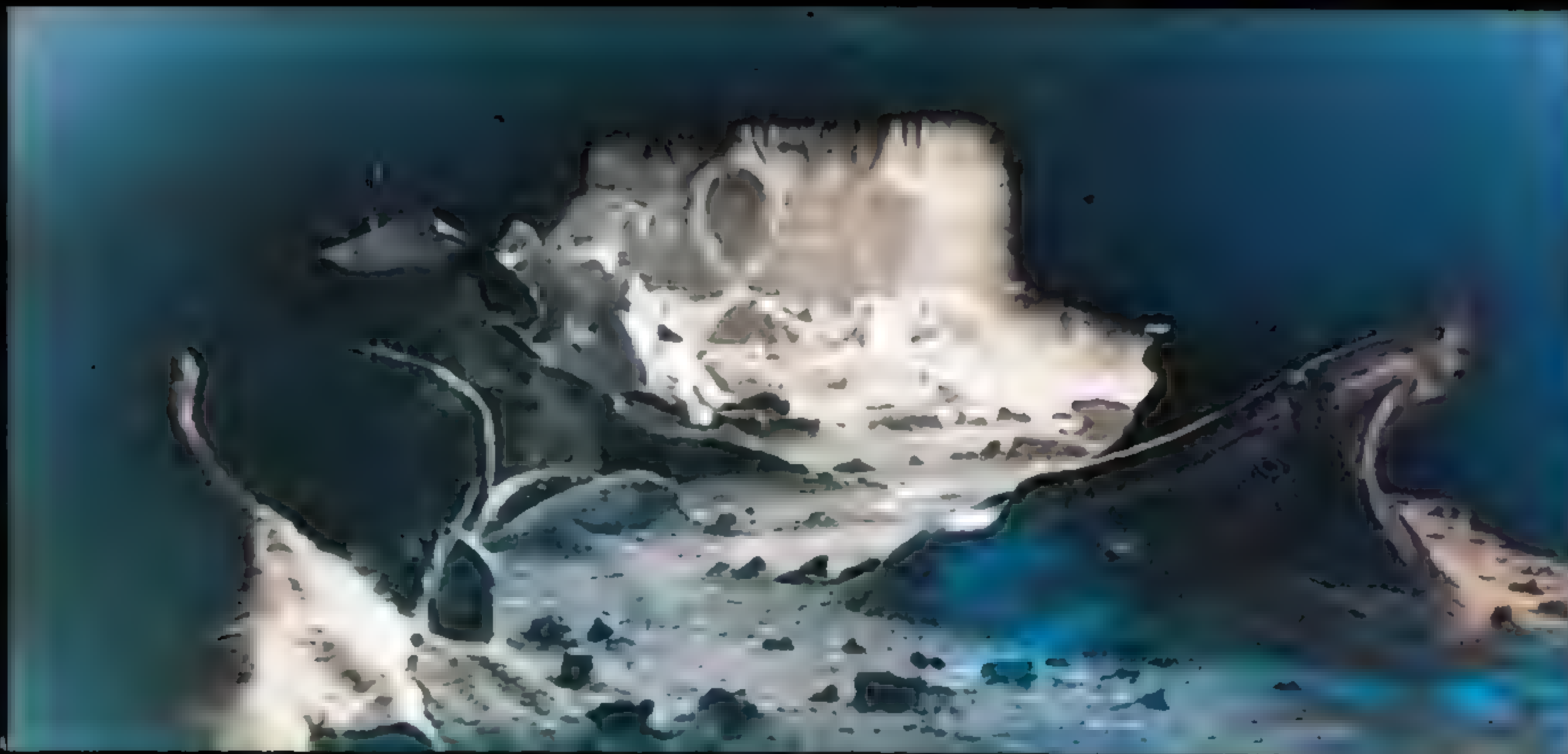
25 July 1978, Shepperton Studios My first three-dimensional sculpture on a really large scale – the landscape and the entrance to the derelict are filmed.



389c-k: Work on building of wreck entrance

389a: Actual scene, entrance passage

389b: Actual scene, entrance passage with mat paint



GANGWAY

24 April 1978, Zürich At Scott's request I paint the corridor (plate 376) that winds like a snail-shell from the entrance to the derelict into the interior, to the cockpit (sketch, plate 376a-c).

7 June 1978, Shepperton Studios The producing company decides not to build the corridor as a single set. They would very much like to, but there isn't enough money in the budget. They will have to find some other way to do it.

21 July 1978, Shepperton Studios Scott inspects the set for the derelict with his crew. He finds that the underside of the stranded ship can well be adapted to make a corridor. This solution upsets me greatly, like all changes to my designs that have to be made for lack of money. Not so much as a matter of prestige, but because I think it will look cheap. But Scott and I always aim to be able to justify our work, so, as ever, I trust him to make the best of it.

8 August 1978, Shepperton Studios Dilley has been given the job of smartening up the walls of the corridor (plate 376e), using my chest elements, which for the design of the neck of the egg-silo I had given membranes (plate page 41). The derelict, already built, forms the roof of the corridor. The whole thing is to be painted dark and shiny and looks to me more like a mineshaft deep underground than a gangway in a space-craft. Strange that we hear no criticism of this, when no one could find enough to say in criticism of the exterior of my derelict.

17 August 1978, Shepperton Studios The previous day's rushes are shown. A test is made of my hieroglyphics picture. Scott's comment: 'It works!' A place has to be found for it in the 'mineshaft'. I had originally meant the hieroglyphics for the décor of the egg-silo, where to my mind they still belong. People who write scripts never seem to share my opinions. It seems that I demand too high a quality, with the result that I lose my temper much too often; all the same, I do understand that this film has to be shot on this budget by 19 October, since the studios are already booked by someone else after that.

25 August 1978, Shepperton Studios The previous day's test shots are shown at one o'clock, as they now are every day. This time it's the scene in which the helmeted astronauts grope their way into the interior of the derelict. Scott and Dilley declare that the scene is well made. I'm quite satisfied, though the film as shown has no longer much to do with my designs.

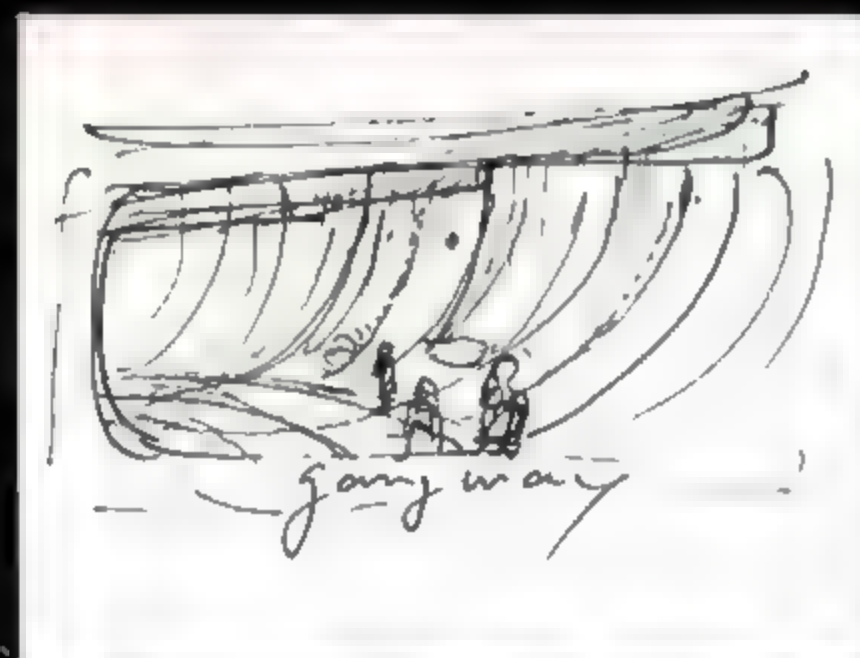
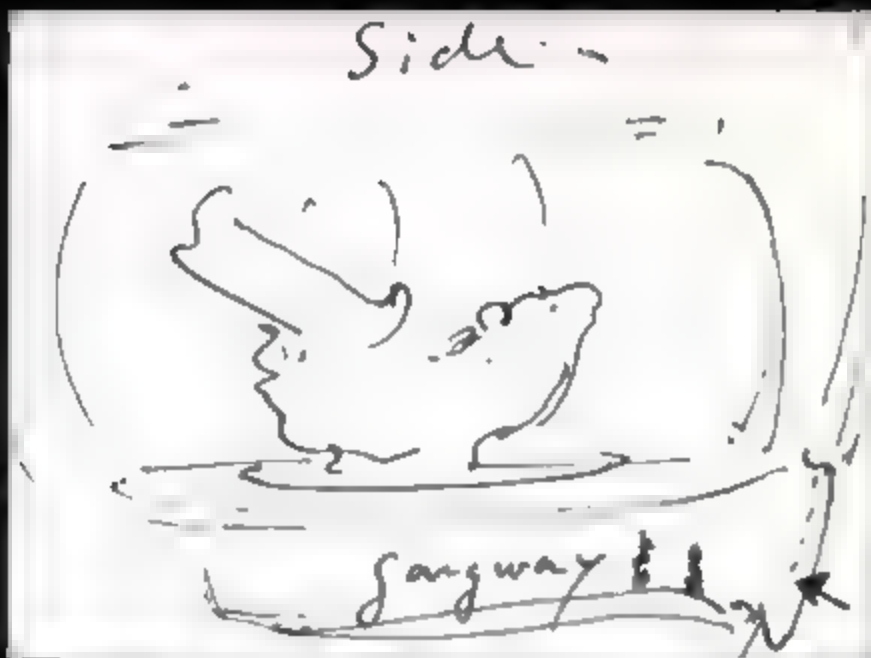


376d: Actual scene

376e: Construction work with chest elements

376: Corridor in interior of wreck, 70 x 100 cm

376a-c: Sketches for corridor



COCKPIT

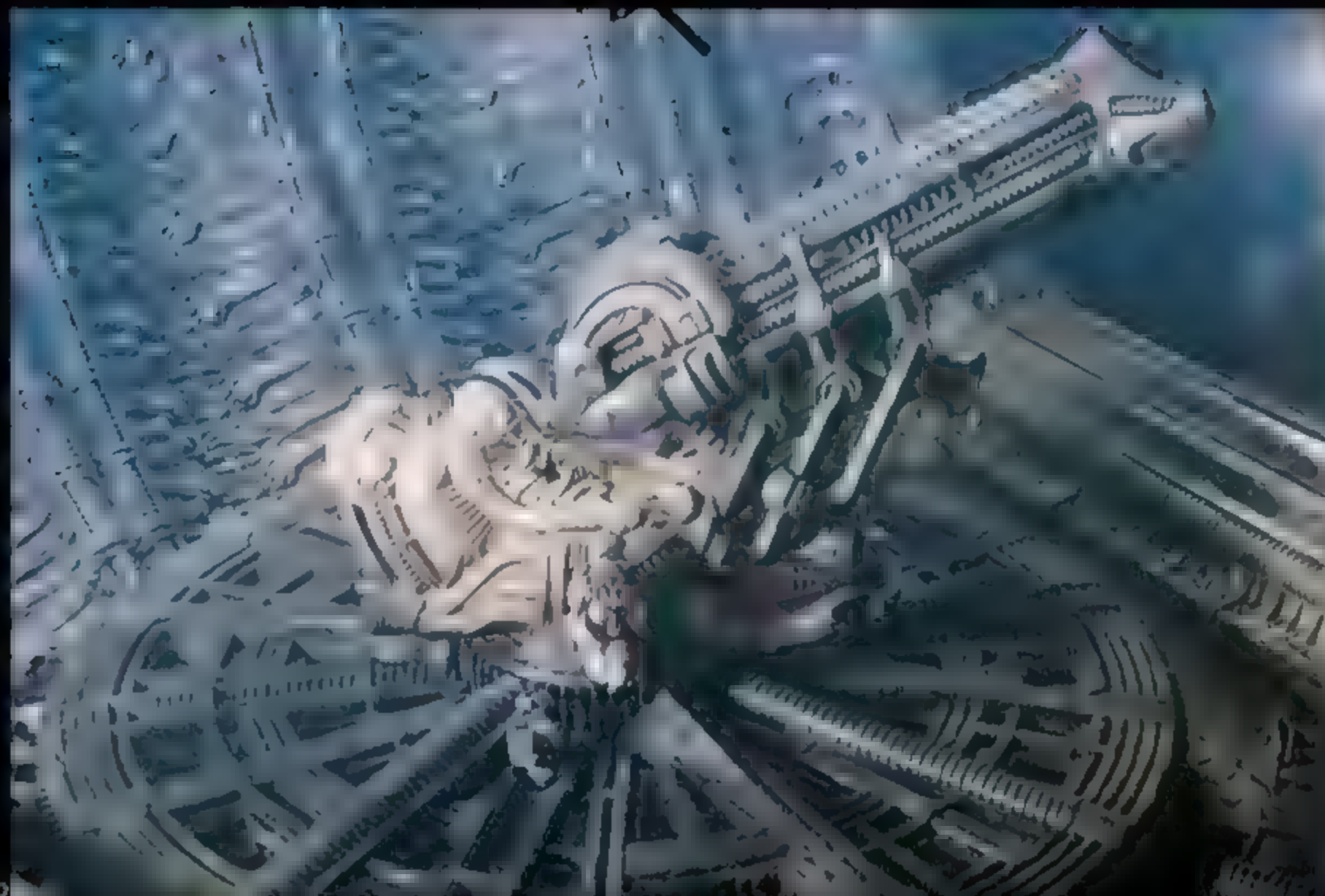
31 March 1978 Just back in Zürich from England. Today I received the specification of the outsize pilot who has to be sitting in the cockpit of the derelict. Scott showed me a cutting from a picture in *H. R. Giger's Necronomicon* and drew the two sketches on page 39, plates 380a and b. I added sketch c and now I'm starting on the back view of the pilot in the cockpit (plates 377 and 380).

25 July 1978, Shepperton Studios car park Working with Voysey on the model of the pilot, for which we shall use plasticine again. Like all the models, this one will only be to a scale of 1/25. We've had no objections from above, so we're working exactly from my designs. The pilot is conceived as one of my biomechanoids, attached to the seat so as to form a single unit. Once again, for financial reasons, the background of the eggship has got to serve for the cockpit as well. This doesn't strike me as at all reasonable, but again I have to agree without argument that two scenes will be shot on a single set. The cockpit will have to be converted into the eggship within a week. The broken floorboard, which looks like a turntable, is some 1.50 metres (five feet) above the floor. In the original script the eggship was immediately below the cockpit, so that one of these holes in the floorboard acts as a way down for the astronaut into the regions below him (plates 377a and b). In his seat in the centre of the 'turntable' is the pilot, eight metres (26 feet) tall; he has an internal framework of steel tubing to ensure stability.

22 September 1978, Shepperton Studios The construction work is going ahead in Stage A. The semicircular background and the props are already in position.

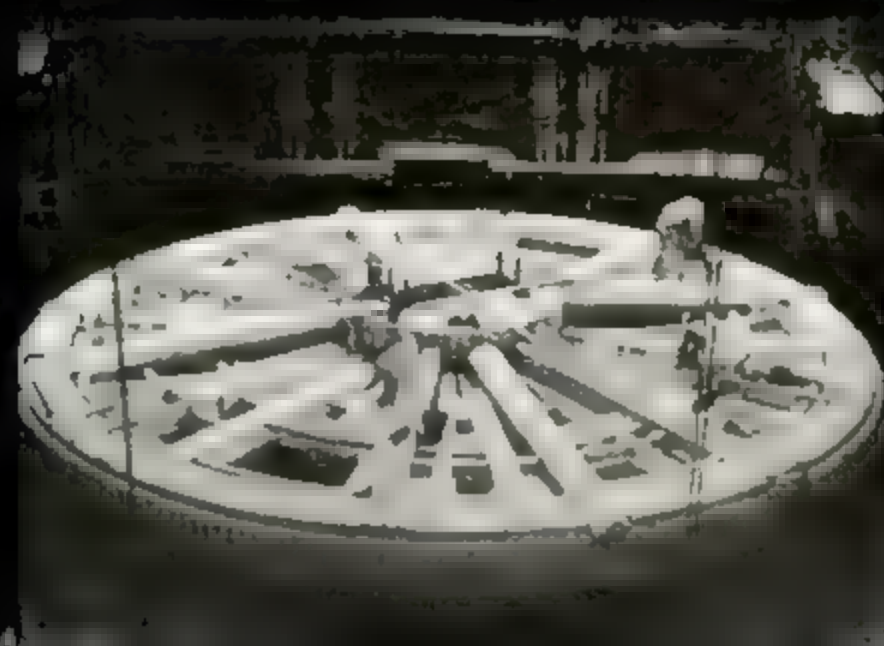
Voysey had made a clay model of the pilot and the back of the seat on his own (plates 380g and h). As usual, a red plaster cast is taken from it (plates 380i and j), which is used for a polyester positive (plate 380k).

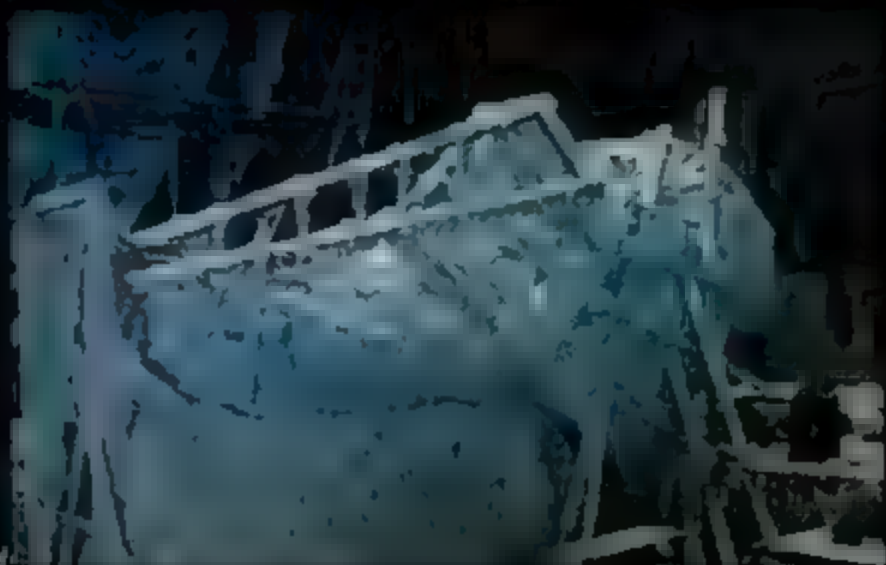
The remaining sections of the seat and of the telescope are cut from styrofoam or moulded in plastic foam (plates 380p and q). All these different jobs go ahead together. It is a pleasure to work with the production crew, who are skilful, exact and always civil and cheerful.



377d: Cockpit (actual scene)
377e: Model for cockpit (scale 1/25)

377: Cockpit, 70 x 100 cm
377a-c: Construction work on cockpit



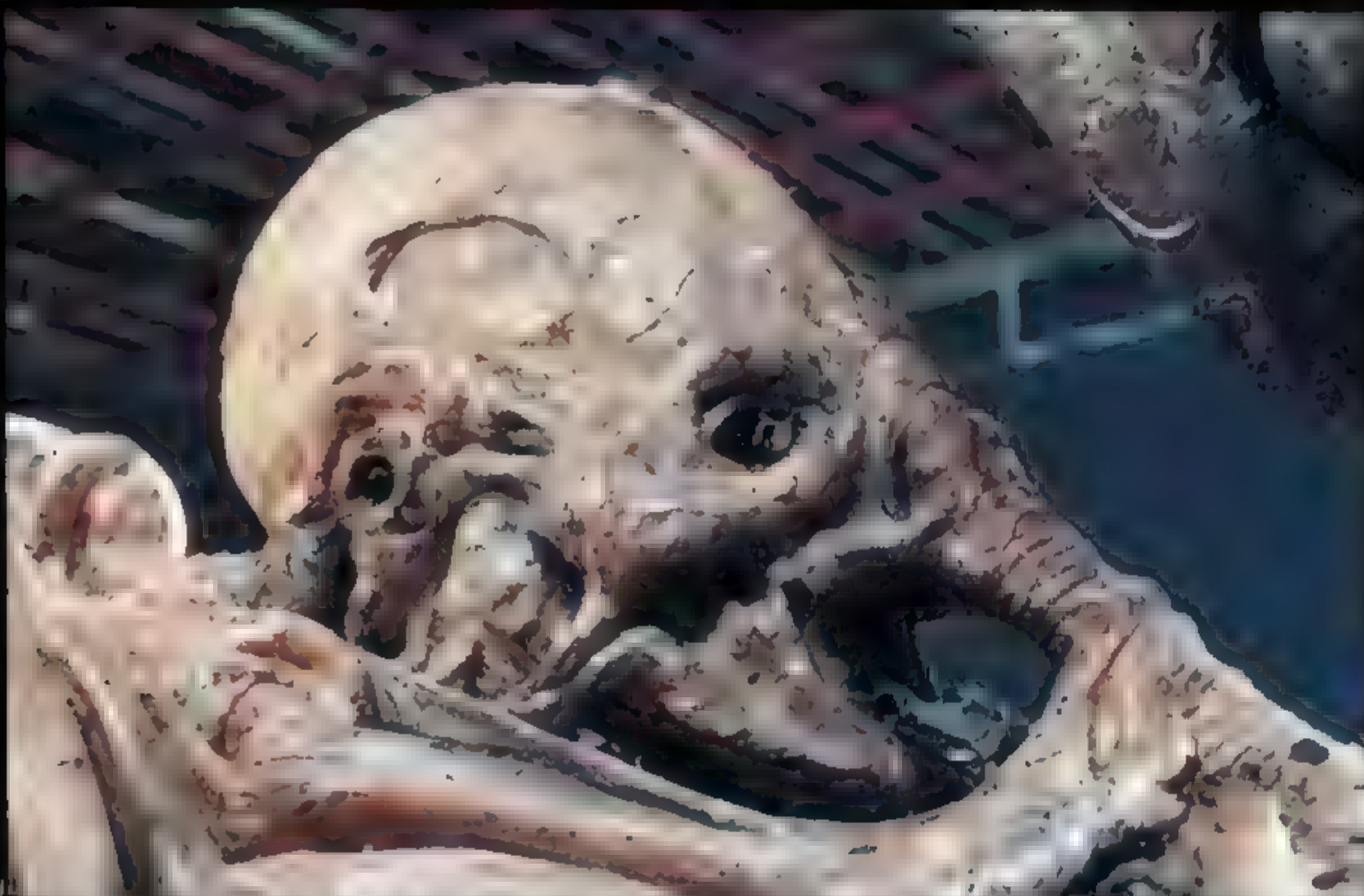
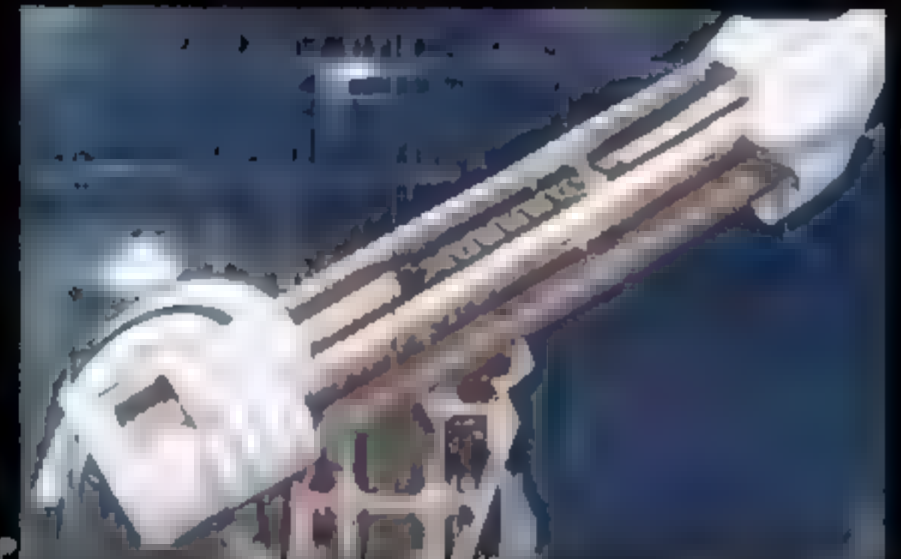


377i-i: Construction of plaster casts of pilot



377k: Pilot in transparent polyester
377l: H.R. Giger painting the pilot

377m + n: detail of the pilot, painted and coated with latex
377o: Voysey modelling in plasticine
377p-r: Styrofoam work on the telescope

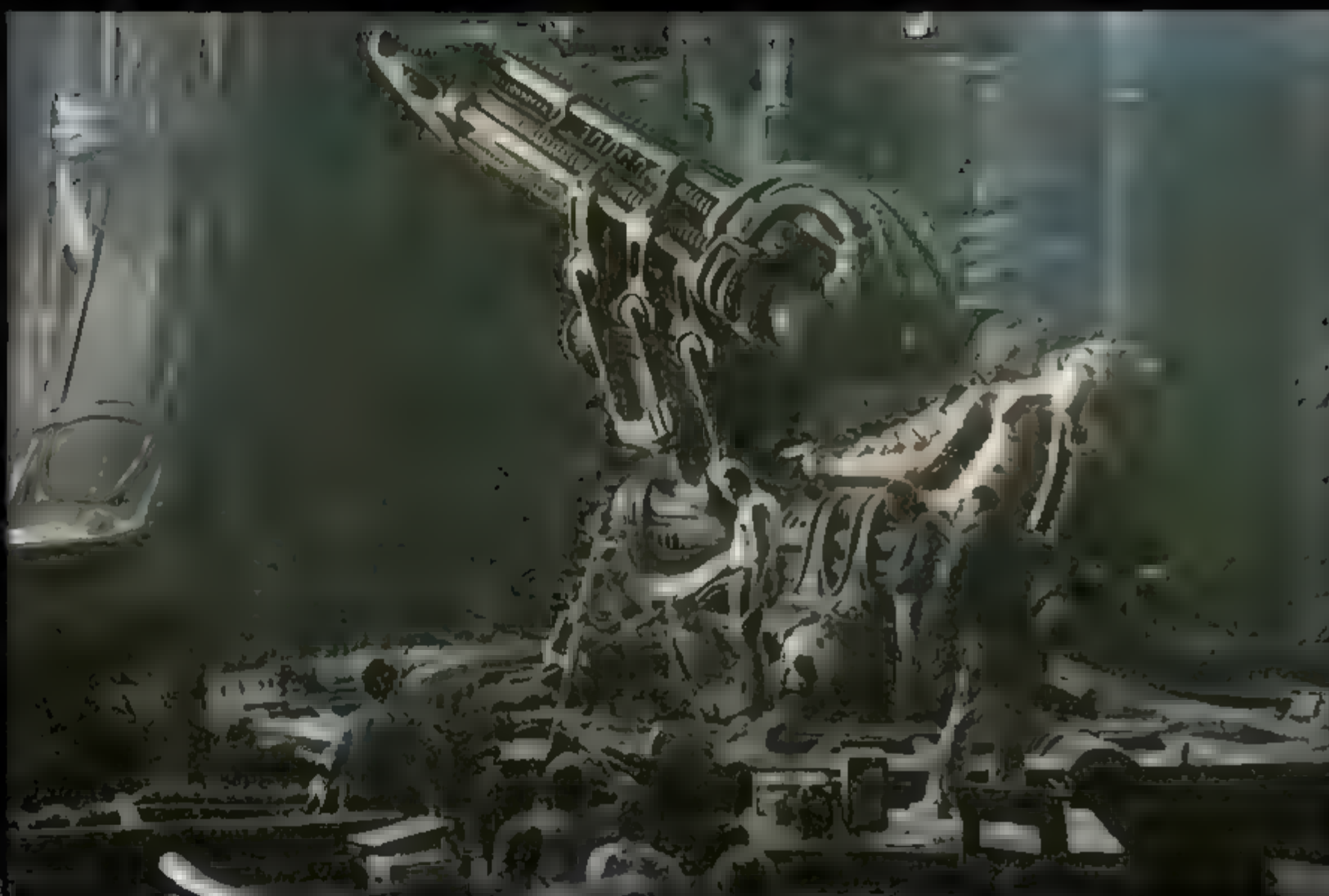


25 September 1978, Shepperton Studios The pilot in the seat has been mounted on the set and is now lifted on to the turntable by the scaffolding workers with the help of a block and tackle. To make things easy for the painters, a scaffold is erected round the figure (plates 377b, 380n). I can't move about enough on the scaffold and work directly on the pilot's head sitting down. Struggling a bit to keep my balance, I coat the transparent body with a sepia glaze, and when the glaze is dry put a coat of rubber latex on it. The latex is liquid, like milk. When it dries it becomes a thin, transparent skin, and I smooth it down here and there with my hand. What I'm aiming at is the impression of a porous decayed skin. While I'm making the last 'cosmetic' improvements to the pilot, the painters give a final polish to the telescope – and none too soon; they are actually starting to film tomorrow. It's so difficult, so tiresome to achieve one's best work under all this pressure of time.

26 September 1978, Shepperton Studios Yesterday we worked late into the night to get the set looking more or less finished. A truck with a camera crane that can be raised and lowered has been set up at the edge of the set for the camera team. The 'special effects' men veil the whole scene in smoke from some kind of burning oil. It smells horrible and makes it very stuffy on the stage.

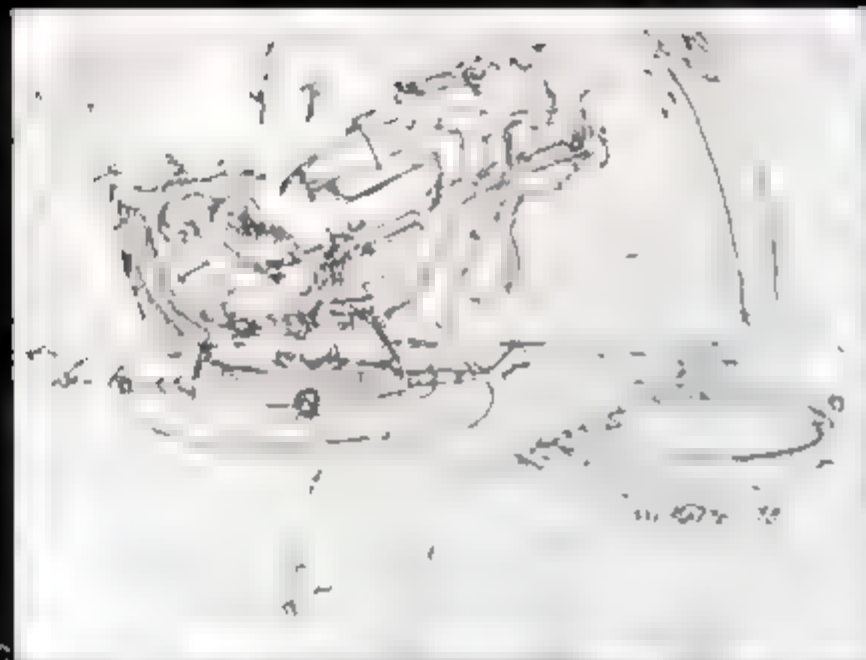
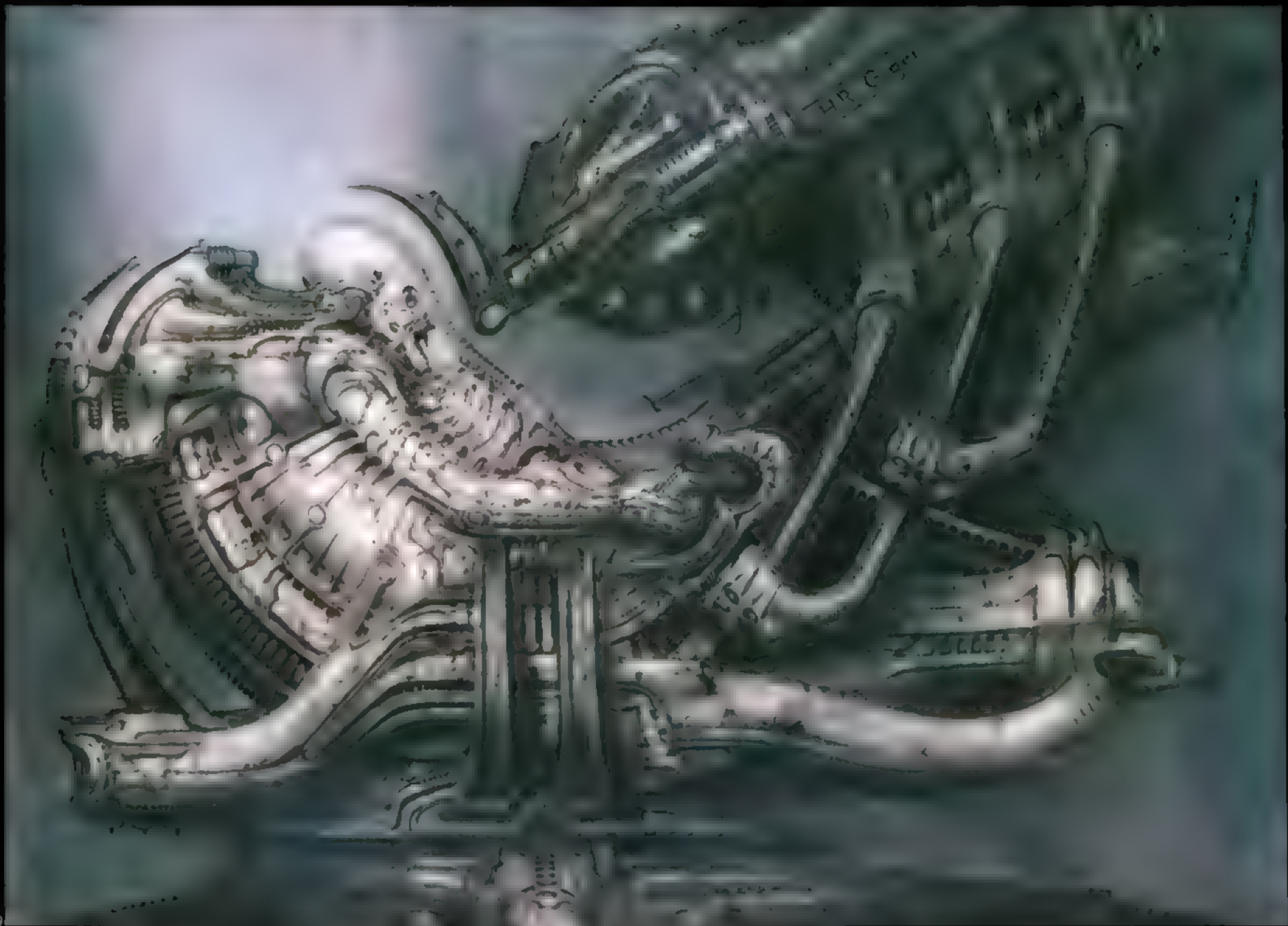
The lighting men crouch in the scaffolding bathed in sweat and light up whatever they are told. Meanwhile Scott hovers on his airy seat with the cameraman, Derek Vanlint, and gives instructions. All the preparations are complete and filming begins. The three actors playing the astronauts are replaced by children, wearing miniature copies of the astronaut's clothes. This makes the enormous figure of the pilot look bigger still (plate 377d).

Everything runs as if by clockwork, although even as late as yesterday I was still doubtful whether the set would be ready in time. However, Mia and I still can't relax; we have to get material from this scene for our documentary film and photographs.



380d: Pilot in cockpit (actual scene)
380e: Filming in the cockpit

380: Pilot in cockpit, 100 x 140 cm
380e + b: Sketches for cockpit by R. Scott
380c: Sketches for cockpit by H.R. Giger

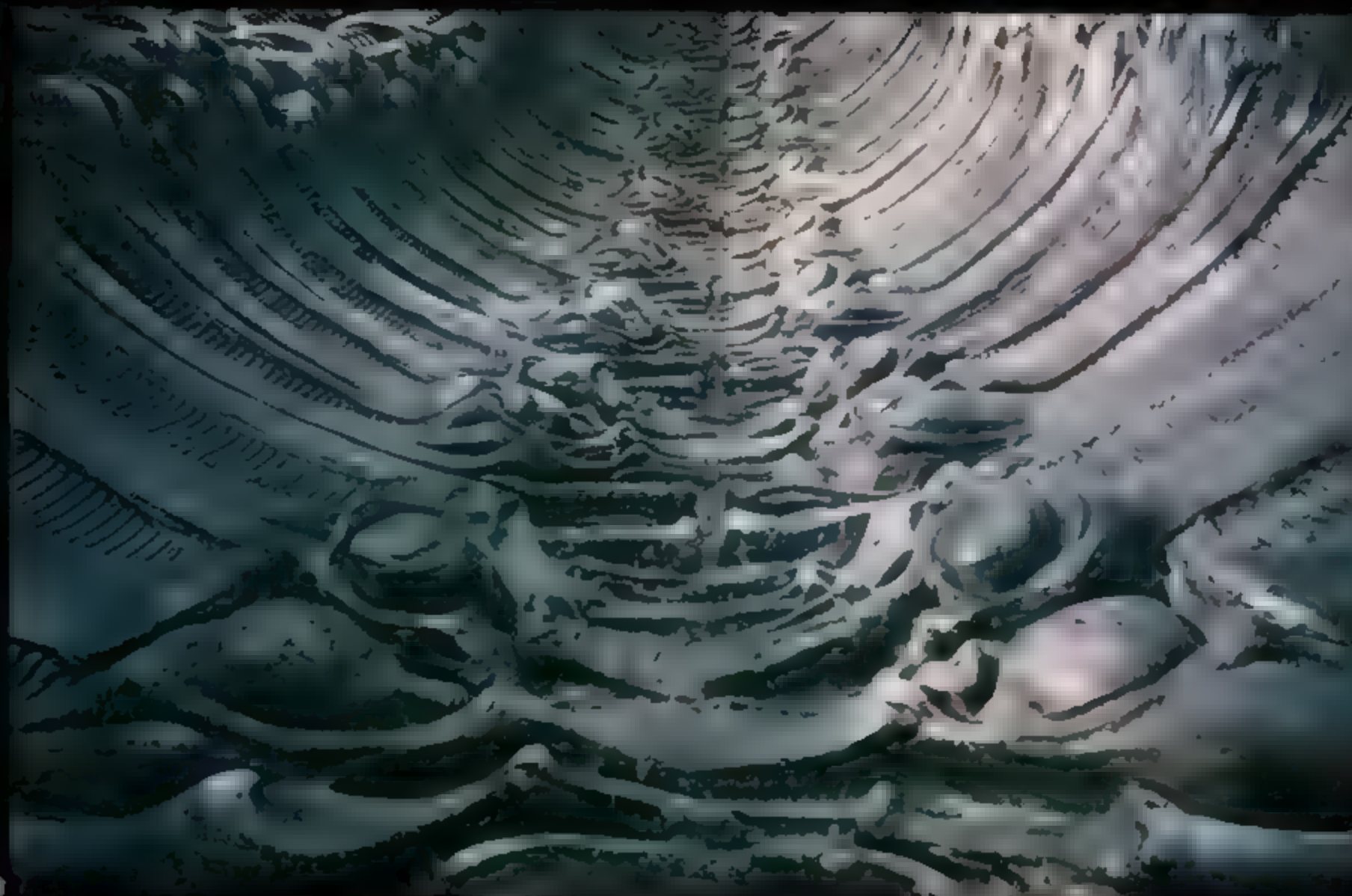


SHAFT

27 June 1978, Shepperton Studios, Stage A At first the square shaft formed the vertical entrance from the summit of the pyramid into the interior.

Later, when the pyramid was replaced by the eggshilo, I changed the cross-section of the shaft to an oval 3.5m by 2.5m (about ten feet by eight). The moist, warm atmosphere inside the eggshilo had to be retained by impermeable membranes in the shaft. Scott and I worked out a good filmic effect: the astronaut who was being let down by his companions on a rope could hesitate for a moment on the membrane and then, startlingly, break through and disappear into the tropical inferno. Since the producers have now decided that the eggshilo is to be an integral part of the derelict, the shaft now forms a direct passage from the cockpit to the eggshilo.

The oval wooden framework has been completed and they're waiting in the plasterers' workshop for the OK to cast the chest-elements needed to tile it. I'm standing on Stage A, delighted that at last something has been built exactly as I designed it. As I celebrate my little triumph, Seymour comes up to me and tells me frankly that Beale has cancelled the construction of the shaft on the ground of cost. I hear and wonder, with the best will in the world I can't understand where they can make any savings here. Presumably it's shortage of time again that's responsible for this decision. The production schedule drawn up by Ivor Powell, the associate producer – the joke-plan, as the witty ones call it – has virtually never been able to be adhered to up to now. The producers are tortured every day by the thought that they won't complete shooting in time. This is presumably also the reason why scenes are continually being scrapped at short notice.

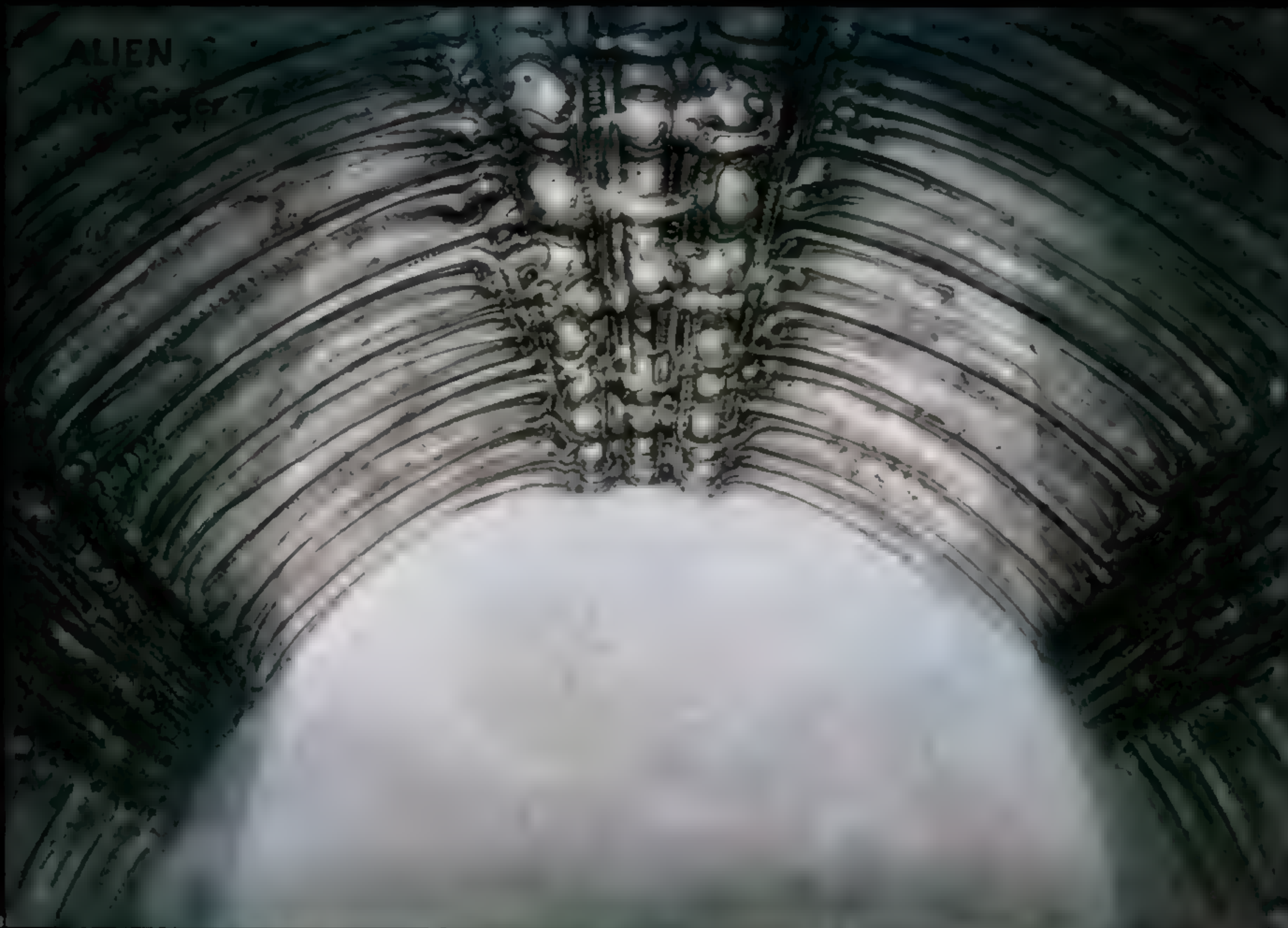


383b: Detail of shaft wall

383c: Astronaut in the shaft wall (actual scene)

383: Shaft with membrane, 70 x 100 cm

383a: Sketches for shaft elements



EGGSILO

6 July 1978, Shepperton Studios While most of the sets I've painted have either been altered to save money or scrapped altogether, I am continually being assured that the egg-silo will really be left in its original form and fully fitted out. At that time I was finishing off the design for this set in my unroofed studio-box on Stage B. I had discussed this with Scott and knew pretty well what he wanted. He had always liked my entrance passage to the cockpit (plate 376) and, since that had after all not been produced in that form, he wanted something of the same sort for the egg-silo. The interior of the egg-silo, which now forms a circular container, is divided into segments of equal size by rods running from the top of the wall to the mid-point of the floor, and each segment is filled with eggs.

I'm in the middle of my work when O'Bannon and Carroll come into the studio to see how my 'omelet' is getting on. They praise my work very highly again, but it sounds suspicious to me, and I'm on my guard. When O'Bannon turns up with Carroll, he's always planning some alterations and using Carroll's authority to get them past me. And once again my suspicion proves to be justified. Following all the praise we now get the criticism, which is enough to make it necessary for me to start the whole job over again. In such cases I just can't restrain myself. When I don't like anything, you can see it at once from the expression on my face. I suppose I'm not polite enough, or not enough of a strategist to play the 'game'. Scott's tactics are quite different. 'Interesting', he says, and I know at once that what he really means is 'Shit'.

For reasons not clear to me, O'Bannon wants only six more eggs. O'Carroll now confirms this — he is a very polite man, but absolutely determined. I've never yet been able to convince him with my arguments when I've been unlucky enough to find him with his mind already made up. A film is first and foremost visual, and consequently it's my view that even the script should be changed if that will result in important visual effects. After this senseless bickering I urgently need fresh air.

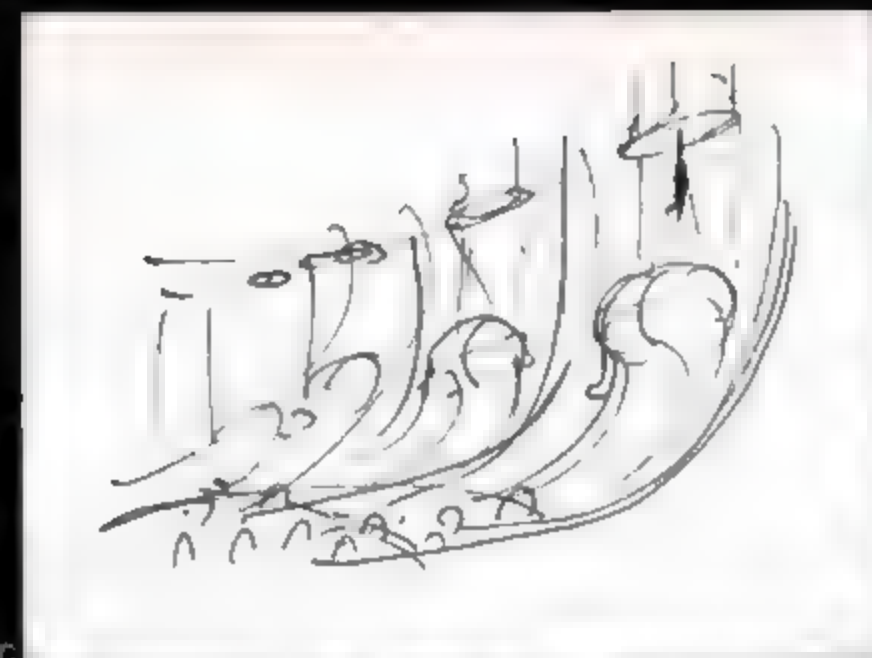


386d + e: Model egg-silo, interior (scale 1/25), version I

388: Egg-silo interior (version II), 100 x 70 cm

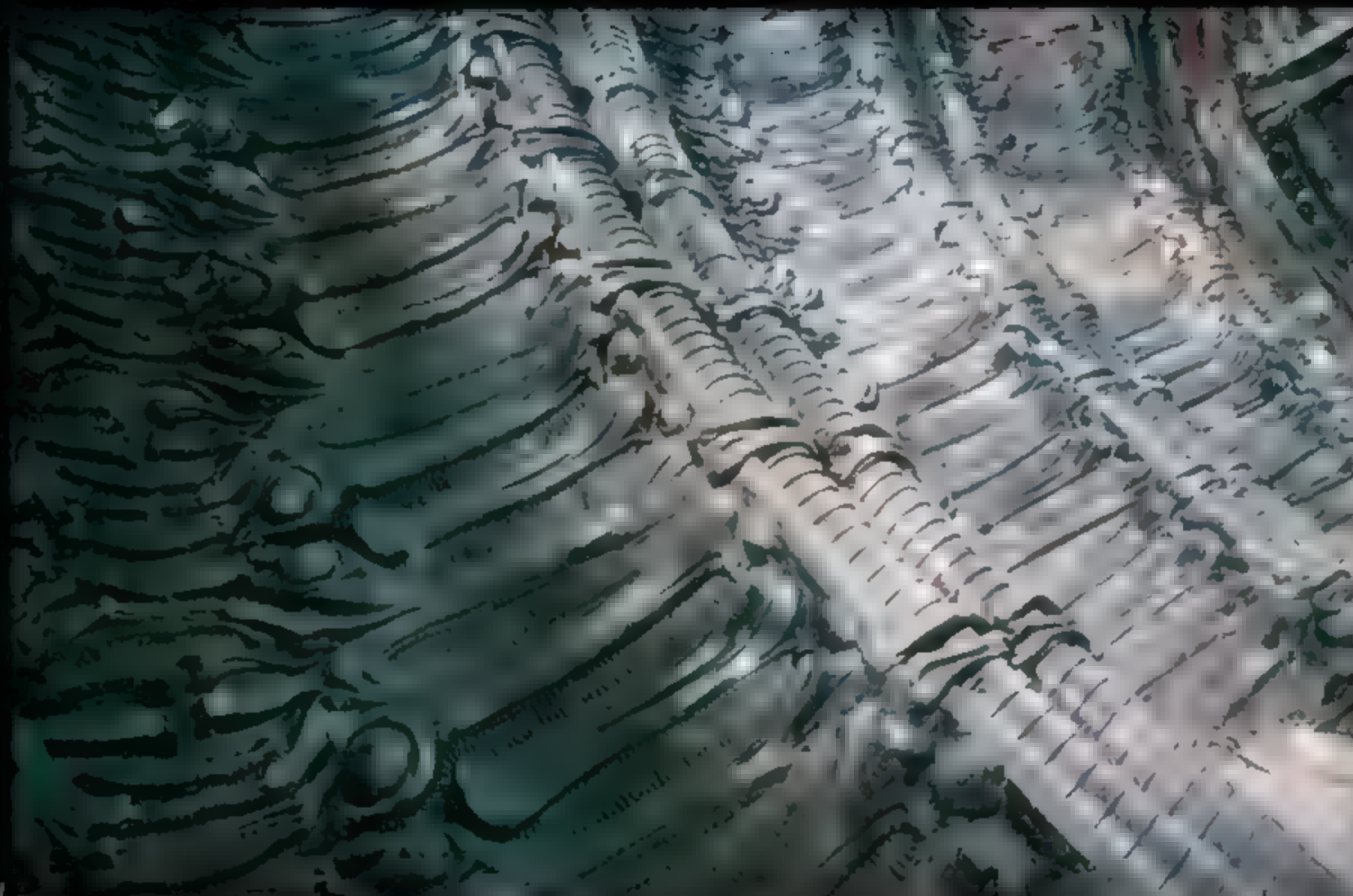
386: Egg-silo interior (version I), 100 x 140 cm

386a-c: Sketches for egg-silo interior (version I)



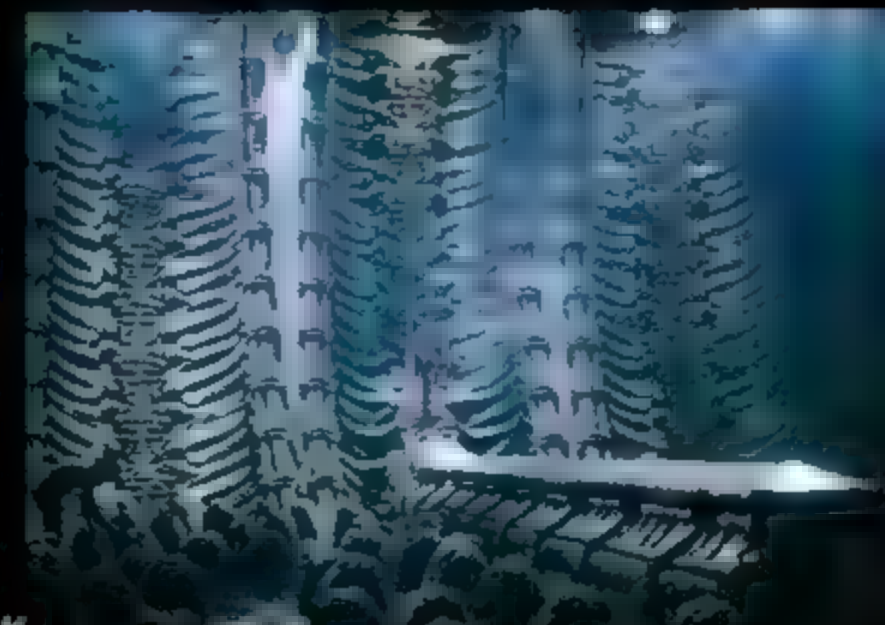
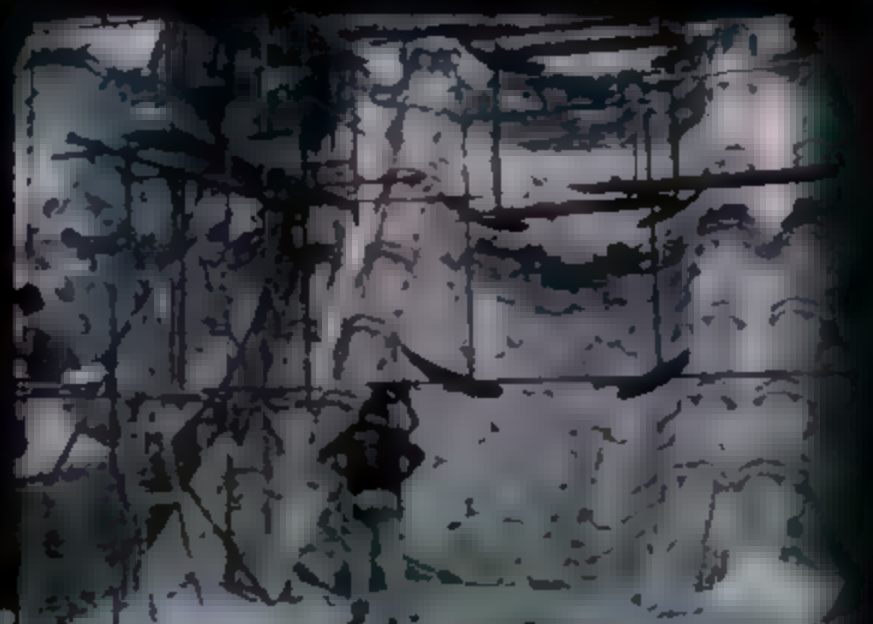
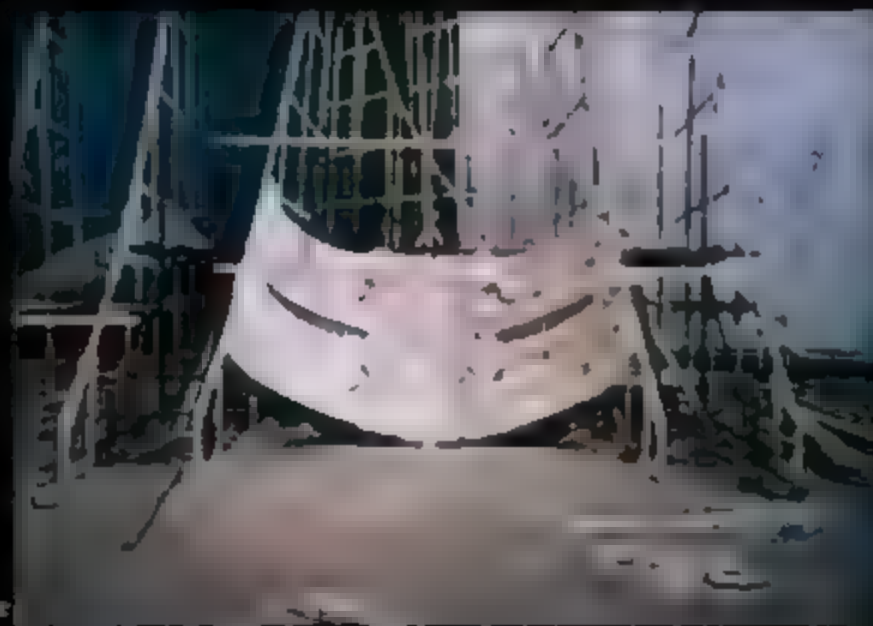
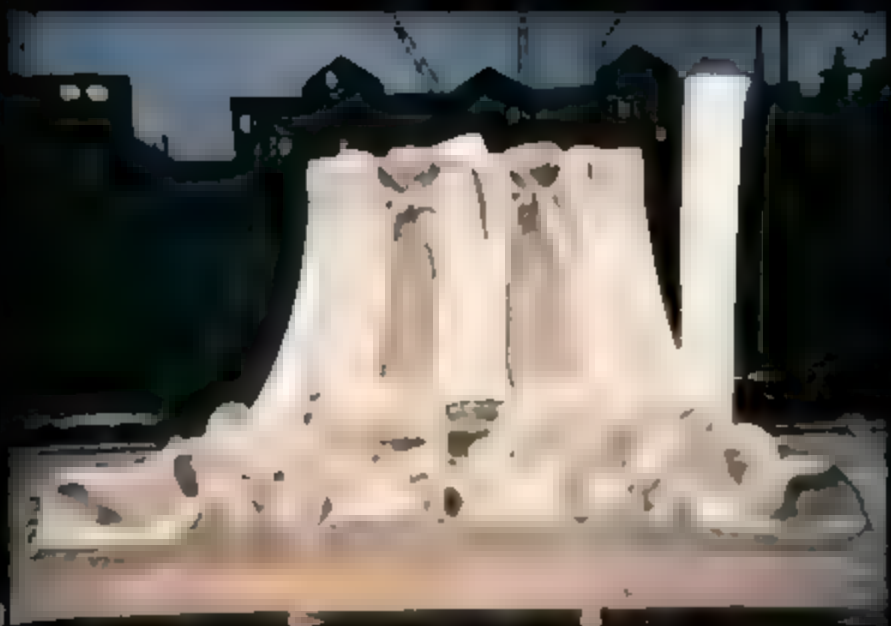
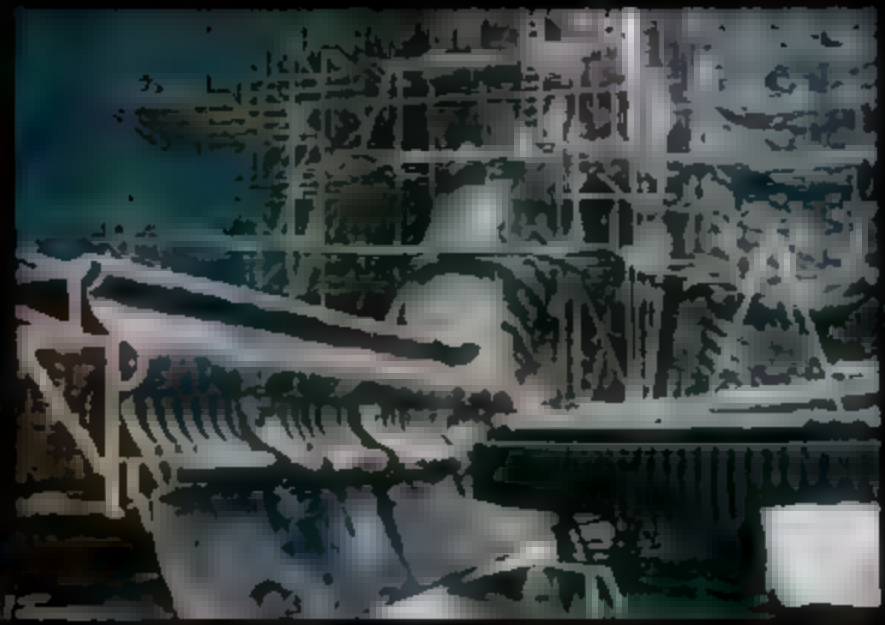
19 July 1978, Shepperton Studios, Stage A Luckily the wretched idea of only having six eggs has been dropped. Scott has somehow managed to persuade O'Bannon, or else he's simply acted on his own authority. This victory is followed by another defeat. During my absence someone has attacked me in the rear and has decided to do away with the big 'pregnant' capsules (plate 386), the symbol of fertility in this set. The reason: 'They're superfluous.' Superfluous? When Voysey, who has to be working in five places at once, has prepared a scale model in meticulous detail (plates 386d and e)? I suppose I shall never master the secret of how such decisions are taken. It is getting clear to me that my creative capacity is slowly but surely being numbed. I'm still convinced that the best critic of an artist's work is the artist himself. On top of this disappointment, I'm told that the cockpit has now also got to do for the egg-silo, so that the background can be used again. What I've objected to in most science fiction films has been the rough and ready production. They make the hero rush boldly through the same passages and try to kid the audience that there is really a huge, invisible network of passages. I've always criticized this cheap workmanship, and now I've got myself involved in a production where the same thing is going on. I go out for a walk, to prevent myself doing something more stupid.

26 July 1978, Shepperton Studios With little pleasure and little courage, I get back to work. I integrate the chest-elements, already consigned to the dustbin, into my castrated design (plates 388b-m), and the producers are delighted. They have decided to spare them in spite of the expenditure of materials and working time. The small chest piece that I've modelled is made in full size by the modellers and prepared in clay (plates 388a-o). As with all models, a rubber mould is made of it. To make the cast positive more resistant, strips of jute are laid in the plaster and reinforced at the back with a wooden framework. About 120 of these elements have to be made to build the whole wall. Each one is hauled up with the block and tackle and fixed to the basic steel tube frame. Built - filmed - scrapped. Why should I get so steamed up about something so ephemeral! Everyone is satisfied with the solution, and Scott will know how to make the best of it. All's well again.



388n: Wall of egg-silo, made with chest elements.
388o: Egg-silo interior (actual scene)

388a + b: Chest element in clay
388c: Rubber mould
388d + e: Elements reinforced with jute and wood
388f-m: Construction work with the elements



EGGS

2 August 1978, Shepperton Studios car park First, for O'Bannon, I painted the egg of Allen I, the Facehugger, in cross-section. Later, in Zdrich, I changed this picture, giving the egg a more organic-looking (plate 363 II). Now I've reached the point of preparing a full-size mould for the 80-cm-high (2ft 6in) egg. A hollow plaster egg is to be made for me in the plasterers' shop from this mould, to use as a modelling base for the opening and the construction.

1 September 1978, Shepperton Studios Scott, Carroll, Dilley and Powell appear to inspect my work. I had just started to apply a texture. The lid of the egg, which in O'Bannon's sketch sprang up at a touch (plate I), I changed it into an organic, vagina-like opening (plates 363 II and 381). When I take off the plastic cloths in which my work is draped, there is a howl of laughter from the whole group. I had lovingly endowed this egg with an inner and outer vulva. To make it all look more organic, I filled some more preservatives with clay and arranged these semi-transparent little sausages on the pink aperture.

When the gentlemen are beginning to get over it, I allow myself to ask whether they like it. Scott thinks it's too good, and Carroll too specific. He's afraid it will get them into trouble, especially in Catholic countries. Dilley would rather have something more like a flower opening. This suggestion gives me the idea of doubling the bud effect and laying the two one across the other. Seen from above, they would form the cross that people in Catholic countries are so fond of looking at. Once again I can satisfy the producers, myself and the public at home and abroad (plate 381e-g).



363a + b: Eggsito interior (actual scene)

363: Alien egg, version II, 100 x 70 cm



ALIEN
HR. G. 73

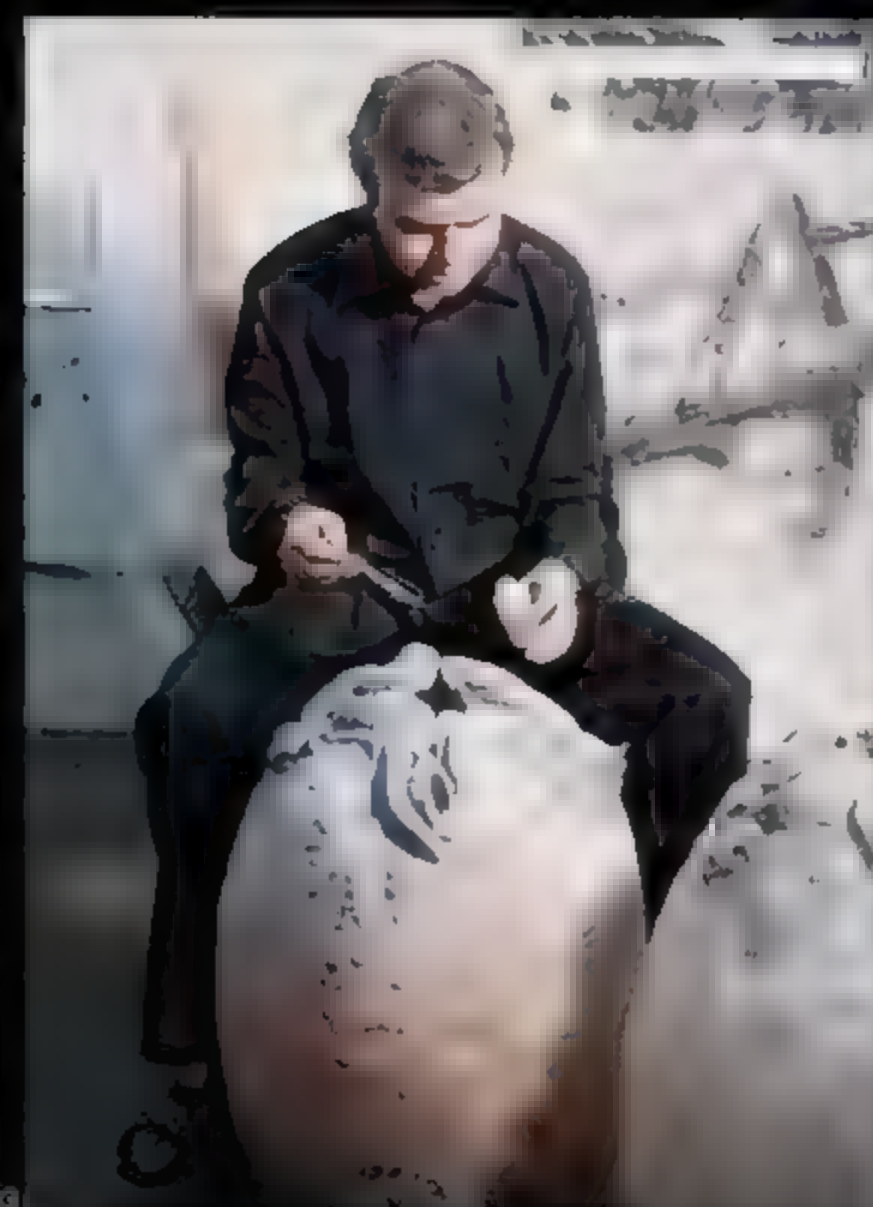
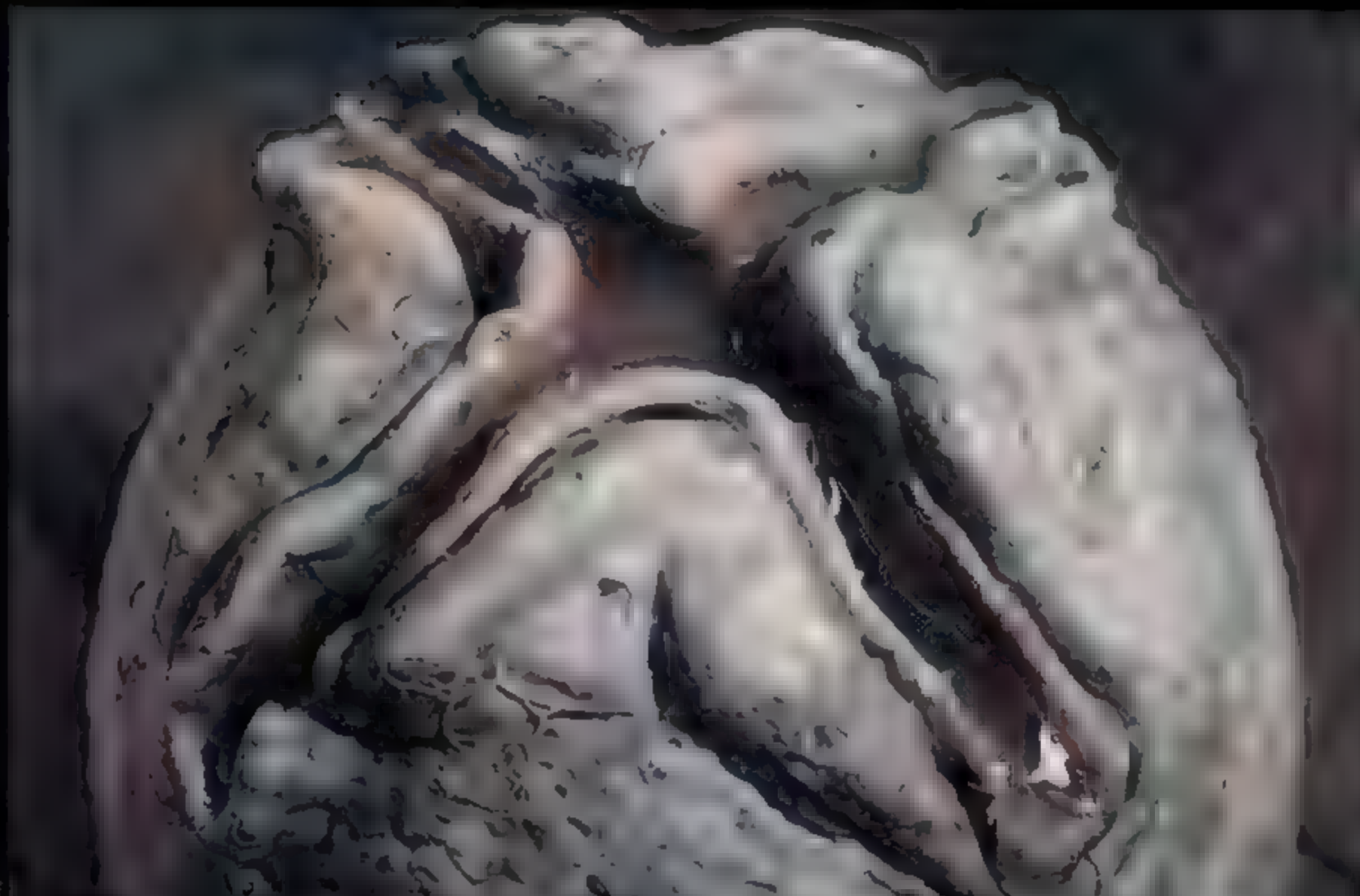
2 September 1978, Shepperton Studios Besides the essential plaster cast of the egg, they also make a rubber negative. The cross-vagina bit is now made in rubber latex from the plaster negative and dried in an oven. The rest of the egg is cast in the rubber mould in transparent polyester. The polyester egg and the rubber vagina are joined together and the whole thing finally handed over to the special effects department, which has to fit the opening mechanism to the egg. The other 130 eggs are made either of plaster or of polyester.

3 September 1978, Shepperton Studios, plasterers' workshop In the original film the floor where the eggs stand was meant to give the impression of being slimy and full of worms. Working in day, I model a sort of carpet with streaks and snaky folds, in the shape of a half-segment of a circle. The plaster form is spread with a thin coat of latex (plates 381a-d) and then frothed up.

Even before it's painted, one begins to get the feeling that this long shape could become life-like.

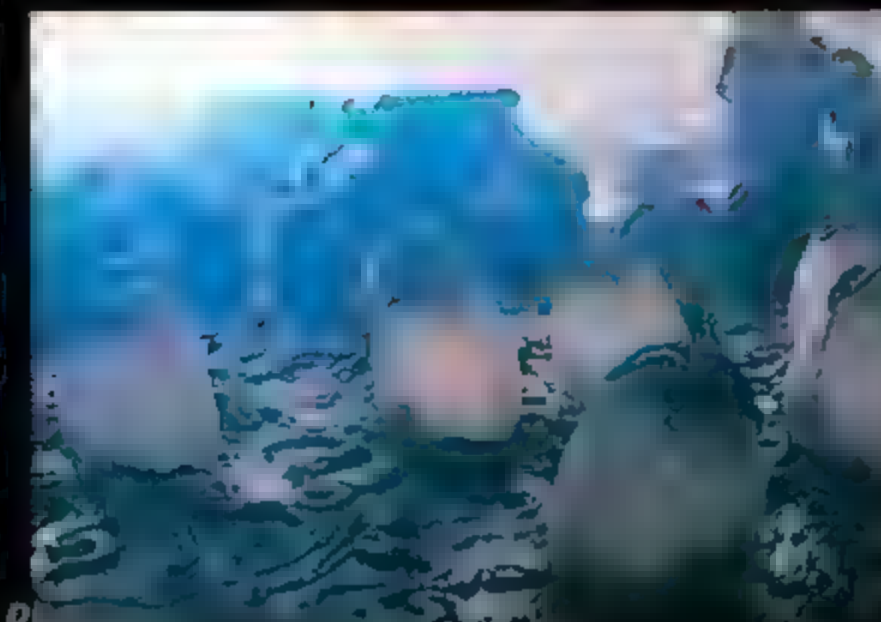
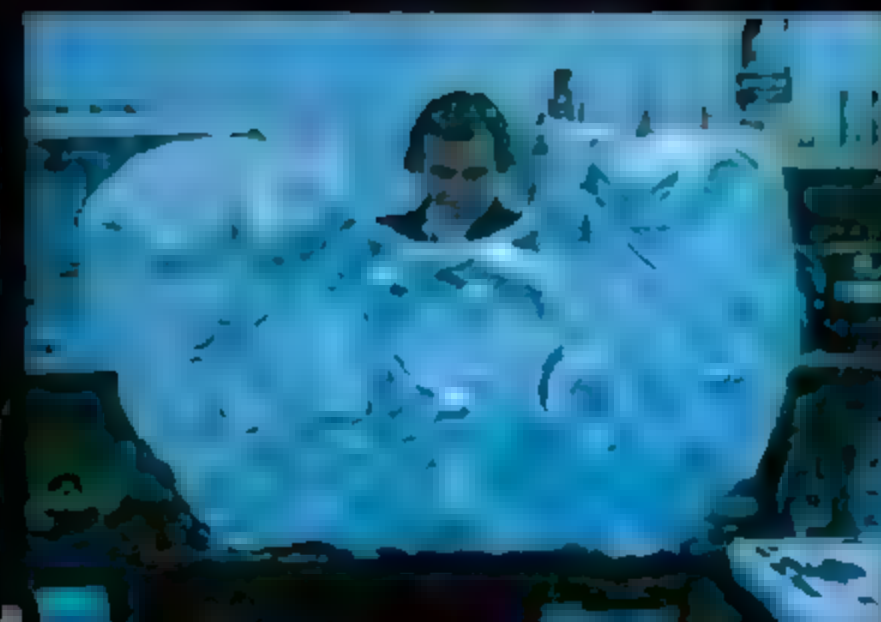
9 October 1978, Shepperton Studios, Stage A. Another great day. My egg-silo is filmed. The turntable with the pilot is replaced by a central track and the eggs. Some laser specialists, based in a villa next to the studios belonging to Roger Daltrey of The Who, have installed two laser-guns. A blue film of light permeated by smoke and drizzling rain now lies mysteriously over the eggs. Above, from the scaffolding, the astronaut is slowly let down into the depths. John Hurt, the actor, doesn't do this himself; it's done by a stunt-man. He uses the chest-elements that the wall is made of as steps. Cautiously he gropes his way along the track between the eggs, slips and falls into the middle of them. Picking himself up, he staggers forwards as if drunk on the slightly yielding floor.

He plays the light from his torch all round the area and finally comes to a halt in front of the prepared egg. Hesitantly he stretches out his hand to touch it, and... Scott is sitting in the frustrated cameraman's place again, and the cameraman stands beside him behind the camera. He films the staggering astronaut, who is cut in two optically by the laser beam, once below and once above the dividing line, in his smoky blue inferno.



381e: Egg opening, coated with slime and latex
381f: Section of egg-silo

381g: H.R. Giger painting the eggs
381: Alien egg (version III), 100 x 70 cm
381a-d: Construction and fitting of egg carpet



COCOON

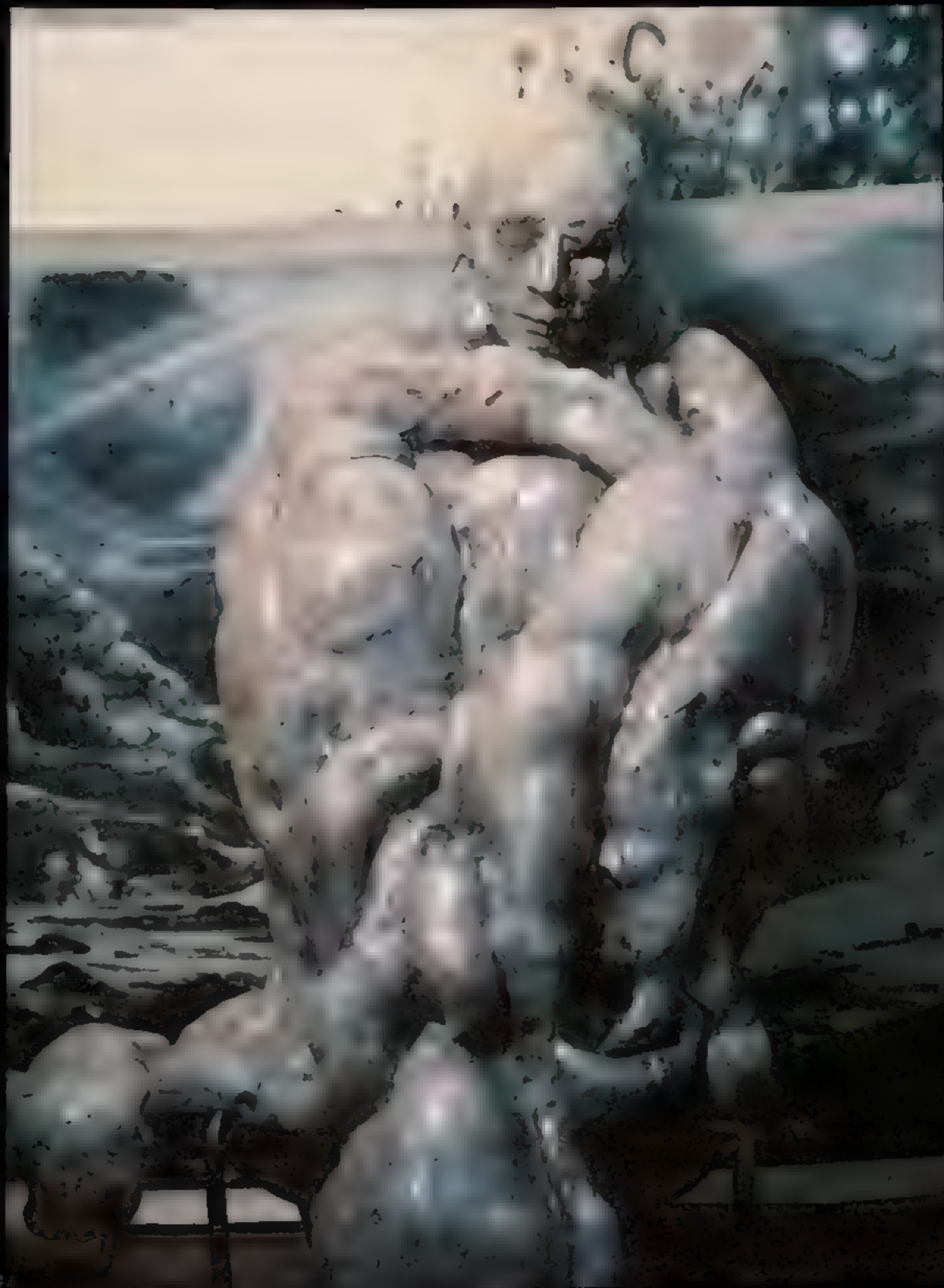
4 September 1978, Shepperton Studios The cocoon in the *Alien* story is a stage through which a victim of Alien III passes before he himself becomes an egg.

Ever since I've been in the studios I've been landed with all the most complex, difficult jobs, which even the chief designer and the art director have difficulty in carrying out. I pass them on smartly to Voysey; that is, we share them between us. We brood together over Scott's rough sketches and try to produce something subtle from them (plates 393a and b). Since shooting began, Scott has been busy filming from mom till eve, and it's a job to interrupt him even for a few minutes to talk about our problems. Often we simply have to work things out for ourselves in the hope that we've grasped what he wants. Voysey takes an egg, gets himself a skull and disappears into the plasterers' workshop. He wants to use my clay sausage method to make the cocoon. For the fresher cocoon, only partly enveloped, he takes a plaster impression of the crouching actor (Tom Skerritt), who of course has got to be recognizable. The other victim (Harry Dean Stanton) of the murderous Alien III is almost completely cocooned, so Voysey can use the invaluable rubber latex for the figure.

25 September 1978, Shepperton Studios A full-size leg of the *Nostramo's* landing-gear has been built where my studio-shed used to be. Alien III has chosen the inside of the leg for its nest and the more or less living cocoons are glued to the bottom of it with the Alien's slime.

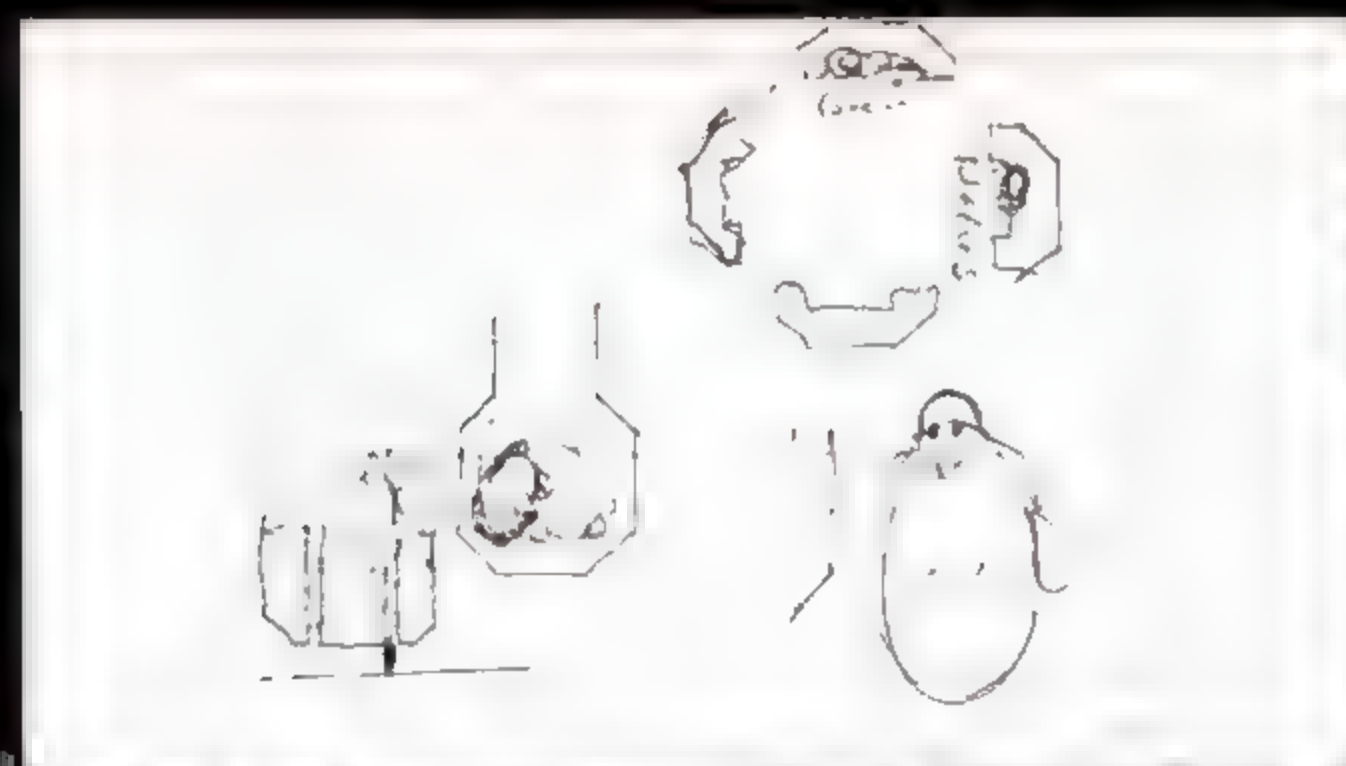
I have a problem. I had intended to fill this nest with thin strips of latex. But since the script contains a scene in which the half-cocooned astronaut, still alive, begs for his death agonies to be cut short with the flamethrower, there is a risk that the whole of Stage B will go up in flames. As a precaution, therefore, it is decided to film this burning scene in the specially equipped rooms in the Bray studios, and my problem with the latex strips is solved.

13 May 1979, Monte Carlo, first showing The cocoon scene wasn't used here, since it would have interrupted the steadily mounting tension in the film.



393c: Part of the cocoon, polyester

393: Cocoon, retouched photograph, 100 x 140 cm
393a + b: Sketches for cocoon by R. Scott



FACE- HUGGER

3 March 1978, London I did some sketches of the first of the three Alien monsters, the Facehugger, among the very first sketches I did. In the script this is the beast that lurks in the egg until some bigger living creature, such as a man, discovers its hiding-place and it is 'liberated' from its sheath. As a reward the man becomes its victim and the host of its embryos, and this leads to his early death and the destruction of all around him. We discuss the role and the appearance of this horrible beast with the aid of my first sketches. The Facehugger had got a bit big, since I had to assume that an egg 800 cm (2 ft 6 in) across must contain something of corresponding size. In the first draft of the *Alien* story the astronaut who is let down into the eggshell doesn't wear his helmet, and the Facehugger can jump straight on to his face and fasten itself there. Scott now decides that the astronaut must wear his helmet and that the beast must attach itself to the helmet first, then break into the eye-holes and force its loathsome tube into its victim's throat. Its spring-like tail is coiled round his throat to render him unconscious.

30 March 1978, Shepperton Studios I've made use of British Airways' compulsory one-hour wait to draw a few sketches. Meanwhile, in my studio in Zürich, plates 366 and 367 have been finished.

Another conference, this time with O'Bannon, the author. Scott thinks it would be more effective to show the beast under the helmet instead of on it. He thinks he can heighten the tension and the horror with the beast's biting its way in, the removal of both sections of the helmet and a close-up of the repulsive creature actually on its victim's face. They soon reach the solution of having a fairly large eye-hole, giving the Facehugger room to gnaw its way in. Since, unlike ordinary animals, it contains a corrosive yellow acid instead of blood, all materials are instantly eaten away when this liquid is released. This conference means yet another change in my designs (plate 379). If only I could get a bit more used to this endless alteration of my drawings.



367b: Astronaut with helmet, on the operating table (actual scene)

367c: Astronaut after removal of helmet (actual scene)

368: Man with helmet, 70 x 100 cm

367: Man with helmet and Facehugger, 70 x 100 cm

367a: Sketches for Facehugger, by H.R. Giger



2 June 1978, England Visit to Roger Dicken, the monster-maker, in his witches' den, with Carroll and Scott. During the journey Scott gives me a few warning tips, since this monster-Dicken is apparently a very difficult character. Above all I must be careful not to criticize his work. He had once 'given birth' to some dinosaurs in one of those monster-films, and this has a distinct effect on the work he's done for us. Since there are no dinosaurs of any kind in *Alien*, I can see no great similarity to my sketches. These clay models strike me as lifeless, as if made to measure. Dicken confirms my impression when he confesses to me that he finds my creatures repulsive abortions and would much rather make something beautiful. If I had felt like that I should have declined the commission. When you work on any object, you must love it, you must be possessed by it; otherwise you will never get really good results. I'm disappointed, and let Scott know it. My anger over the six wasted weeks when I was paid off returns more strongly than ever. This silent but holy rage stimulates me to model my monsters myself. I tell Scott and Carroll of this spontaneous decision. Carroll stares at me in amazement and asks if I've got the technical skill for it. I gulp, and repeat for the umpteenth time that I studied Industrial design at the Zürich Art School for four years and that I'm in no way ashamed to get my hands dirty at work.

3 June 1978, Shepperton Studios During a sleepless night I've made sketches for the construction of the monster and begin to model one of the Facehugger's long fingers with a wire frame, plastic tubes and plasticine.

29th July 1978, Shepperton Studios I agree with Scott to make the Aliens translucent. One should be able to see the skeleton, the blood circulatory system, the organs etc. The skeleton has been cast in plaster and I am starting to design the Facehugger's skin when – how could it be otherwise – the order arrives from production to stop work on the Facehugger immediately and devote myself exclusively to designing the large monster, Alien III.

15th August 1978, Shepperton Studios The Facehugger has been finished by Dicken according to my initial directives. Not a trace of transparency but, in view of the means at our disposal, a perfect job. Scott's comment: I can work with that.

Once again, I am surprised at how a material like latex, with a bit of jelly, smoke and a few strings (to make it move like a puppet) can give the illusion of life.



379d + e: *Alien* / Facehugger (actual scene)

378: *Alien* / Facehugger, 70 x 100 cm

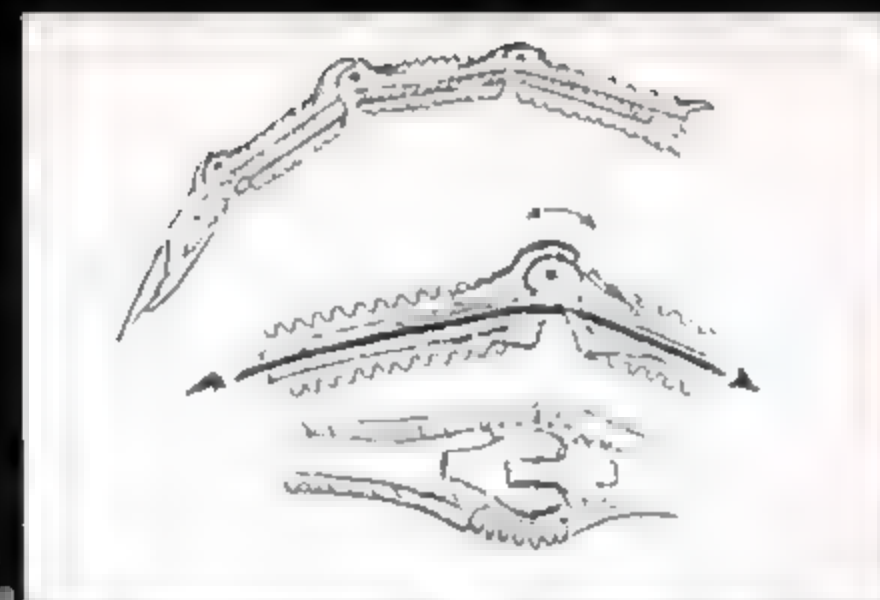
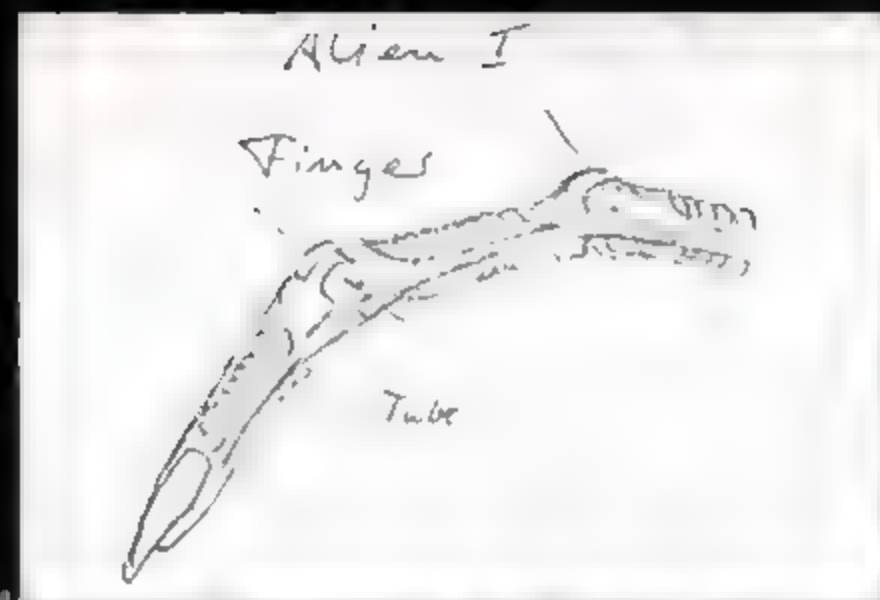
379a + b: Detail sketches for Facehugger by H.R. Giger

379c: Filming with *Alien* egg and Facehugger



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CHEST BURSTER

11 March 1979, London The monster Alien II, the Chestbuster, born in the astronaut's chest from the embryo so strangely deposited by the Facehugger, has matured. It wants to free itself from the 'womb', and bites its way to freedom through its host's chest. It escapes and in a very short time, lost in the labyrinth of the *Nostromo*, it grows into Alien III.

To me this is the most horrible, the most impressive scene, and it's the most difficult for the team to realize.

We come to the conclusion that we must make the beast blind and give it a terrific set of teeth – something like the detail in Francis Bacon's 'Crucifixion' triptych.

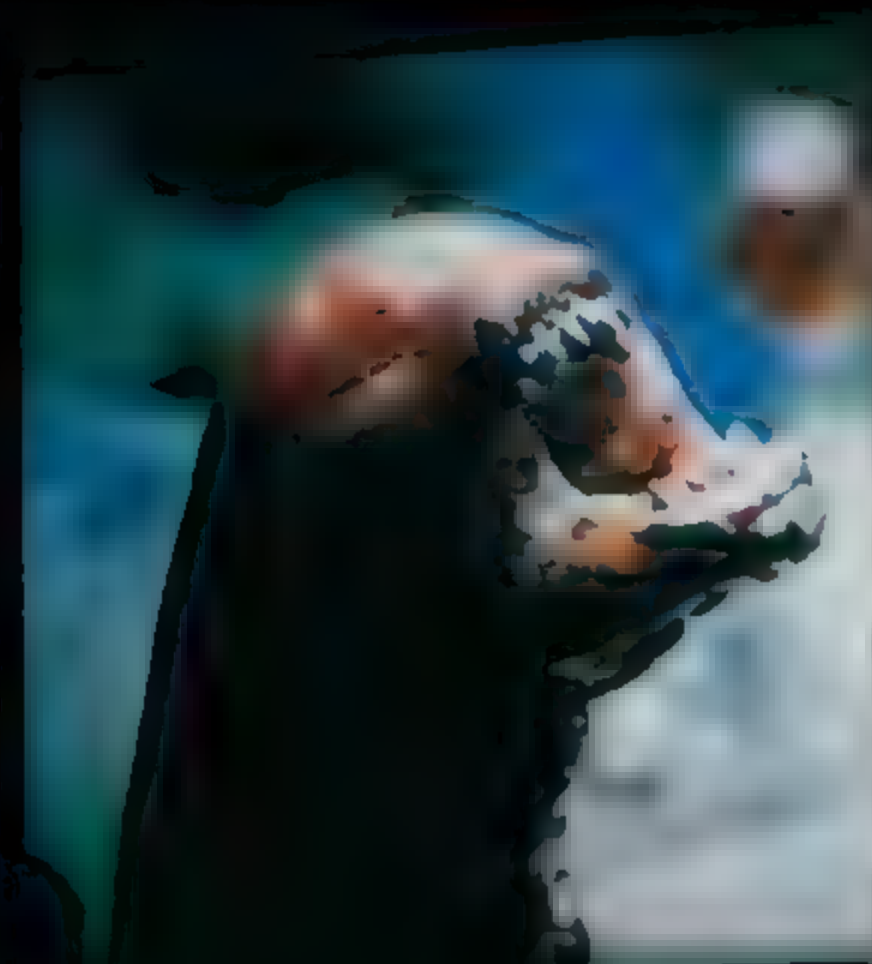
Plate 368, a design for the Chestbuster, was produced in my flat in London. It reminds me of a degenerate plucked turkey. Since the beast has got to grow up into Alien III, the main features of the full-grown Alien must be already recognizable. To make sure that I get these resemblances I must first see how Alien III is getting on. I'm not satisfied with my work.

2 June 1979, England Visit to Dicken. On instruction from Scott, who has given him plate 303 from *H. R. Giger's Necronomicon* to work from, he has made a preliminary model of plasticine with an interior framework of aluminium. The creature has a long section ending in an attached tail. These attached extremities still remind me of dinosaurs, and I don't like them at all. It will be better to shorten the fore

feet and scrap the hind feet altogether, so that there will be no sort of resemblance to any known kind of animal.

4 August 1979, Shepperton Studios Shooting day has dawned. Three Chestbusters have been prepared for this scene. The first consists of a technical interior construction made up by the Special Effects men for when the beast bursts out of the astronaut's chest. The second can open its mouth with the aid of a wind-pump and can make its carotid artery swell up. The third, the one that gets loose, has been given a tail that lashes out uncontrollably all round it, worked by air pressure.

Dicken and a man from the Special Effects department lie in waterproof clothing under the table on which the horror scene is played. Lying in a bucket, and looking very unappetising, are the entrails of a pig, which are to be used to make the hole in the chest look genuine, and next to them is a huge bottle full of artificial blood, made from raspberry juice. The camera team have taken the precaution of sheltering behind and under big sheets of plastic. According to the script, the astronaut has to be lying on the table. To make it look real, the actor lies under the table as if he was in a deck-chair. A papier-mâché figure has been made of the rest of his body, and now lies in place on the table. Optically it now looks as if the actor was lying there himself. The place where the artificial and real bodies meet is covered by the T-shirt. The astronaut lies there, in agony, hitting out wildly all round him; he groans, and the bewildered and shocked astronaut crew hold him down. Scott gives a sign, and the upper part of the Chestbuster is catapulted through the papier-mâché chest. This horrific action is accompanied by fountains of blood spurting in little jerks out of little plastic tubes. At the moment his chest is broken open, the actor gives a final shudder and breathes his last. The scene is filmed three times, with three different lenses and from different positions. Each time, the actors have to change their blood-soaked clothes and the papier-mâché chest of the victim in his T-shirt has to be replaced. A really impressive drama for a layman. I can't wait to see how it looks in the actual film.



368b + c: (actual scene)
368: Alien II Chestbuster, 70 x 100 cm
368a: Sketches for Chestbuster by H.R. Giger



ALIEN

23 February 1978, Shepperton Studios Alien III is the monster, the superstar, the title-role of the film.

O'Bannon had used a monster before, in his film *Dark Star*. For that they used a balloon the size of a medicine-ball which hopped about on two hands. To begin with we weren't clear what the Alien in *Alien* ought to look like. Scott definitely wasn't going to have some ordinary cinema monster stamping stiffly and awkwardly through the film. We carried out some tests in Scott's office with a group of people, including some children. Scott thought that a big man with some children strapped to him and the whole group 'wrapped up' in rubber might produce a monster with a number of movable extremities. We tried the idea out several times, but had to accept that it gave rise to too many problems. The possibility of building a robot Alien was rejected for reasons of safety. There could be no absolute control over it when it was armed; the actor might get hurt, or even killed, during a fight. After endless discussion we decide to make our Alien insect-like and elegant. It adds to the horror through the swift, fierce attacks it makes and by the way it's filmed. There's very little time to design it, especially since experience has taught us that the real problems only arise when the designs are being executed.

It seems almost an impossibility to me to create a really credible monster. Behind every film monster I always see a human being, well or less well disguised; they give me no sort of shock at all. My sketches, completed in a very short time, are discussed. I've given a function to the long shape of the head; it conceals a long tongue, with sharp teeth, which the Alien can flick out like an anteater (plates 372, 373 and 378). To give it a certain relationship with the Chestbuster, of which Alien III is the mature form, I alter the Chestbuster to give it a long head and neck for the tongue (plate 368).

Scott relies on the striking effect of the escalating mouth and tongue opening, with the aggressive double rows of teeth.

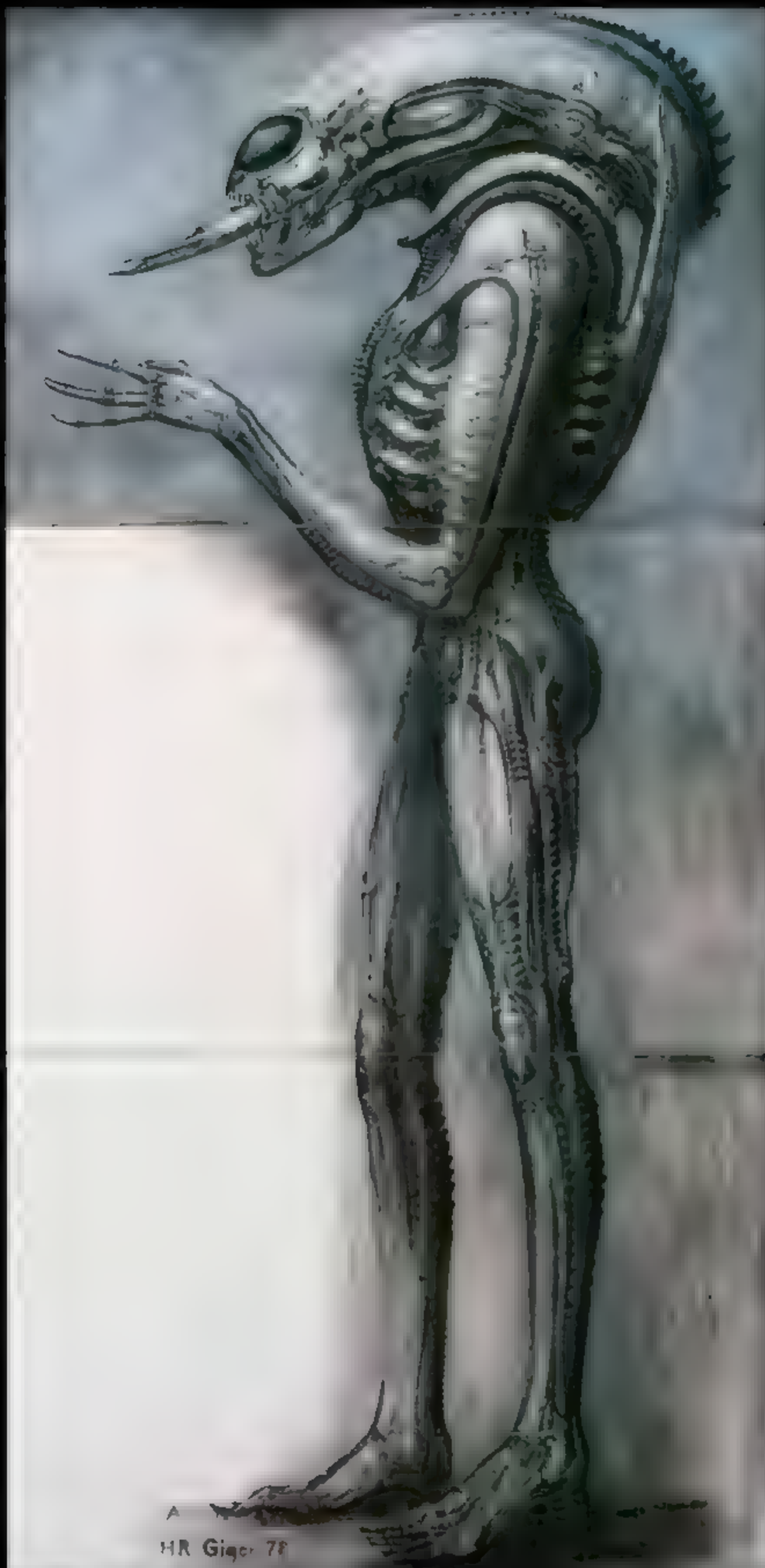
The eye section of the front view (plate 371) is too suggestive of motor-cyclist's goggles. It has to be replaced by a dark, semi-transparent cranium, stretching back over the whole cranium and showing the eye-holes in the skull (plates 373 and 374). There is now room under this dome for a possible mass of brain, which might consist of living maggots. Scott would actually like the whole Alien transparent, in the way I've made my biomechanoids. The whole of the monster's outer skin would have been organically permeated with



370a: Alien III (actual scene)

370: Alien III side view, 210 X 100 cm (version 2)

371: Alien III, front view, 210 x 100 cm (version 2)



A
HR Giger 78



ALIEN
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cables, fluted pipes and other technical gadgets. Scott shows me a picture of Leni Riefenstahl with a huge Nubian over two metres (6ft 7in) tall. He wants a man of that size for the Alien.

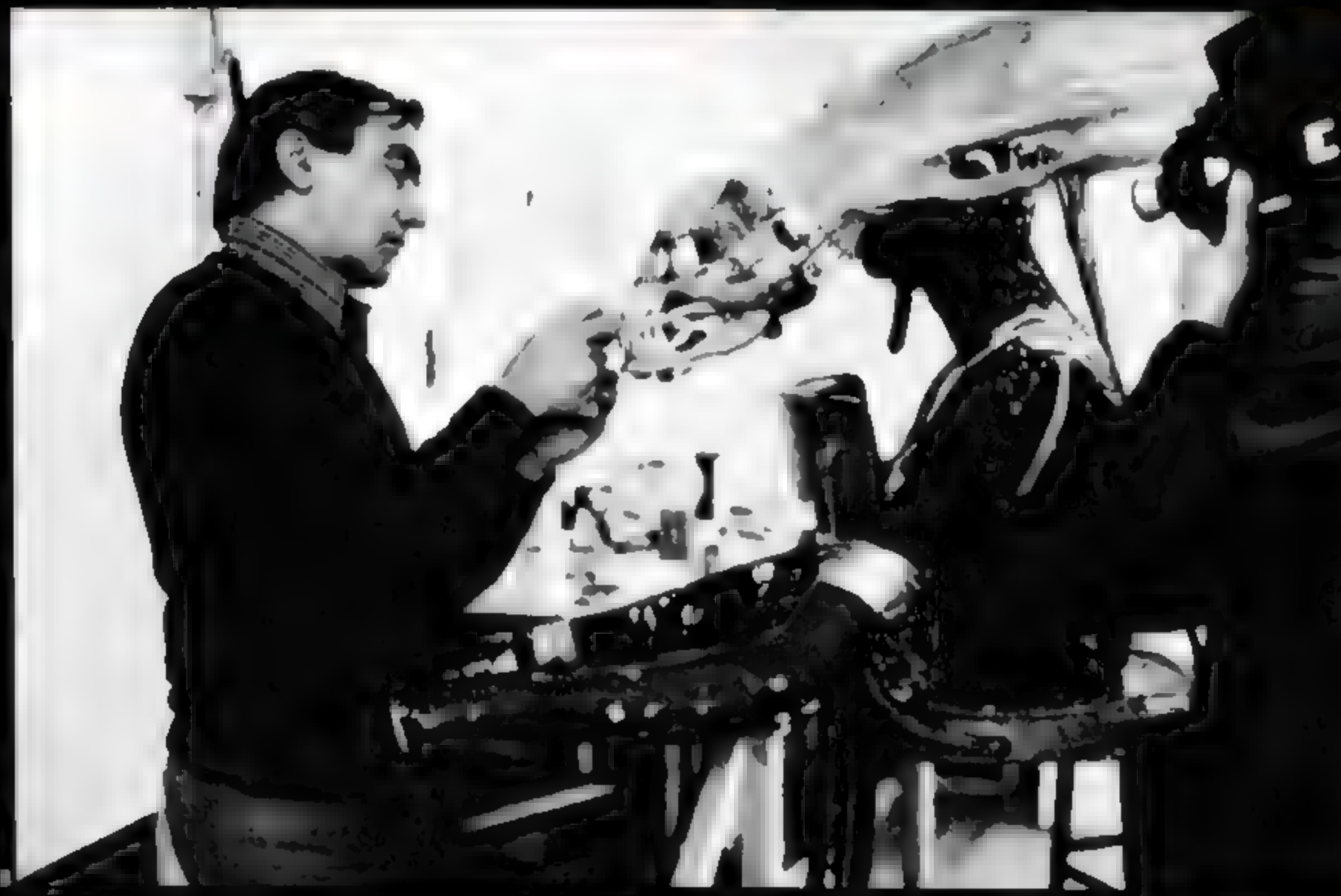
2 June 1978, Shepperton I sit in the garden at the King's Head with Mia, thinking over what I said when I went to see Dicken.

After the disappointing results we got from Dicken and from a video-tape we've received from America (where they made an Alien that looked much more like a dinosaur than like my sketches), I was sure that it would not be possible to leave the Alien as I saw it to anyone else. I'm just beginning to realize what I've let myself in for in the job of modelling the monster myself. Everyone agreed with my suggestion at once, and Dicken was presumably greatly relieved to be rescued from this phantom by my decision. Bolaji Badejo (plate 372g) a black man 2.10 metres (6ft 10½ in) tall, has been spotted by Scott in a bar, and will play the living nucleus of the Alien.

Another shed for the modelling work for *Alien* has been put up on Stage B. Since Voysey is busy somewhere else, they've got me another assistant, Eddy Butler, a good sculptor and a very nice man. We have a lifesize figure of Bolaji in front of us, and hanging on the wall is a nice new timetable to make us get up the necessary steam. The *Alien* nightmare, which drives almost the whole production team hysterical during the months to come, has begun.

3 July 1978, Shepperton Studios According to Carroll's timetable, already a week behind, the first polyester mould of the Alien's head and tongue, with a full-size sectional plan of the head, is packed in a well padded case and sent to Carlo Rambaldi in Los Angeles. Rambaldi is a celebrated specialist in the mechanization of artificial creatures in films. I suppose King Kong, for which he got an Oscar, is his most famous work. To make sure that at least one example of the head will be mechanized in time, another model of it is entrusted to an engineer who has his workshop on the grounds of the Studios.

After some discussion, a bit troublesome and nerveracking at first, about how we should work and what materials we should use, Butler finally decides to work my way. These arguments have cost us valuable time. Since I still have several other things going, I have to keep rushing from one studio to another. The production division keeps reminding us about which job is most urgent, so I can't get on with anything in peace. I begin modelling the body of the Alien on the mould of the actor. I arrange various technical pieces, as well as the ribs and spines of widely different animals, on a thin sheet of plasticine. I undertake to get one half of the monster ready so that Butler can do the other side. Our two-man team is reinforced by a new colleague with the engagement of Andrew, who made the masks for



373a: Work on head of *Alien III*

373b: Carlo Rambaldi with head mechanism for *Alien III*

373: *Alien III*. Front view (version 3), 70 x 100 cm



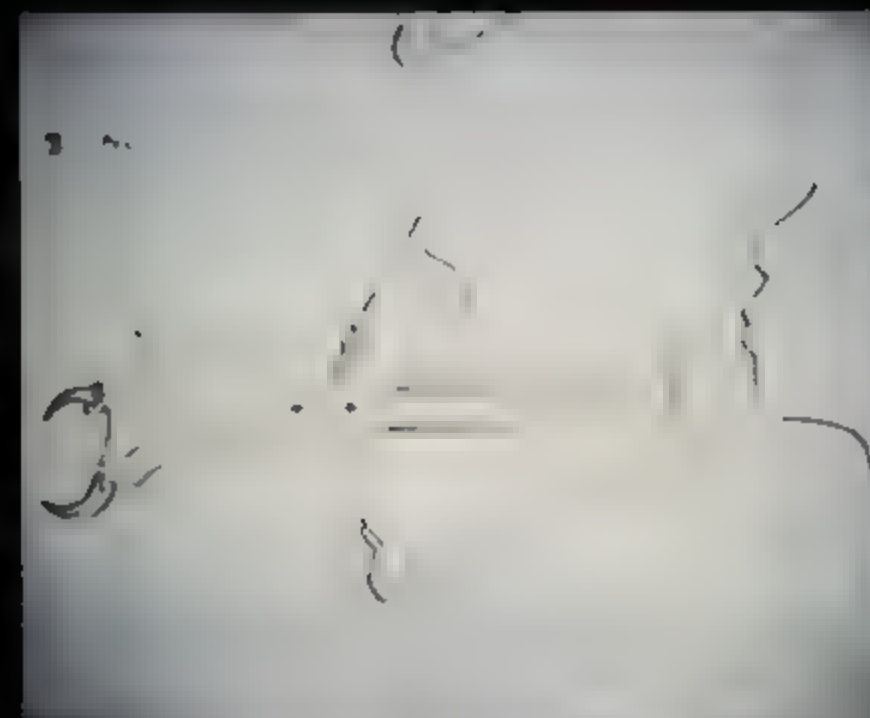
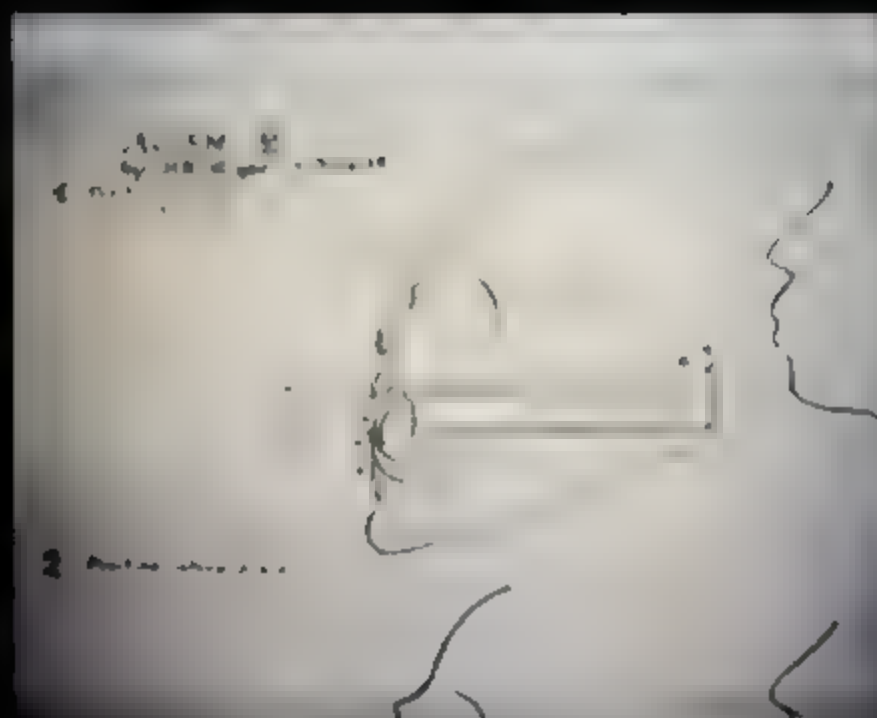
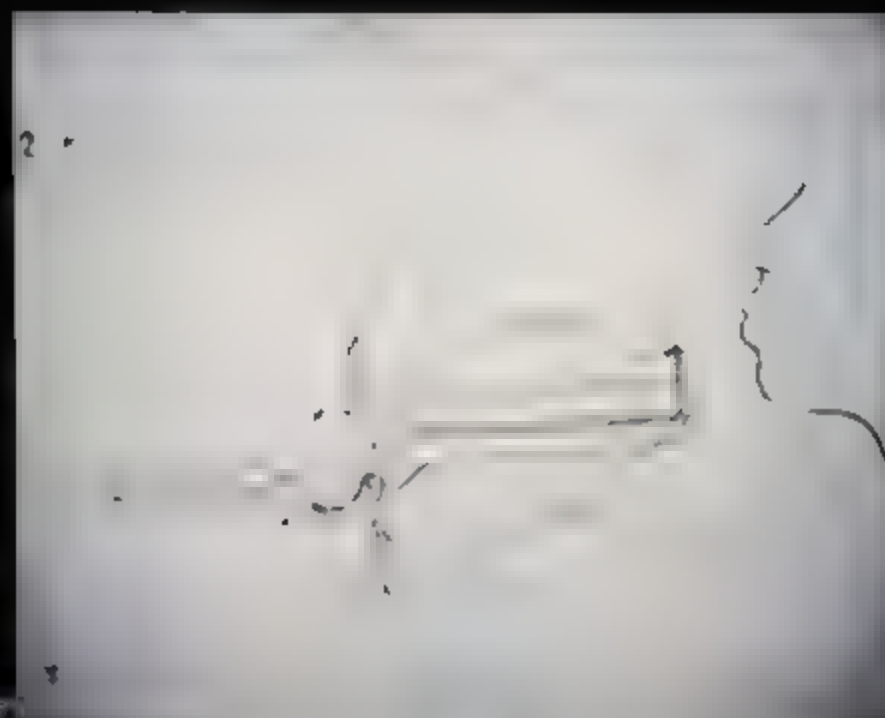
ALIEN
HR Giger 78

Star Wars and is very experienced in working with all sorts of materials. He is sorting out the problem of how to make the costume transparent.

Friday, 28 July 1978 At my insistence two more women, Shirley and Patty, are taken on to help with the work of modelling the monster. Butler is busy making the cranium, which will give the Alien its final form. Andrew is to make it up later in transparent PVC by a special process.

I'm called over to the producer's office. The gentlemen there are very worried that the monster is not going to be ready in time. They say it will cost an enormous amount of money if they can't film on the prescribed day.

3 August 1978, Shepperton Studios At last we've got to the point where all the moulds needed for the Alien's costume are lying in the plasterers' workshop. Since several casts will have to be made from each mould, the moulds have been made of a hard-wearing silicon-rubber with a plastic sheath. Andrew keeps producing more and more experimental transparent costumes. However, the ideal solution has still not been found, because the material is not resistant enough, and tears. Andrew has built a special oven for this work in which the moulds rotate at a constant speed so that the liquid rubber is spread evenly. Unfortunately he still hasn't produced anything we can use, and time is running short.

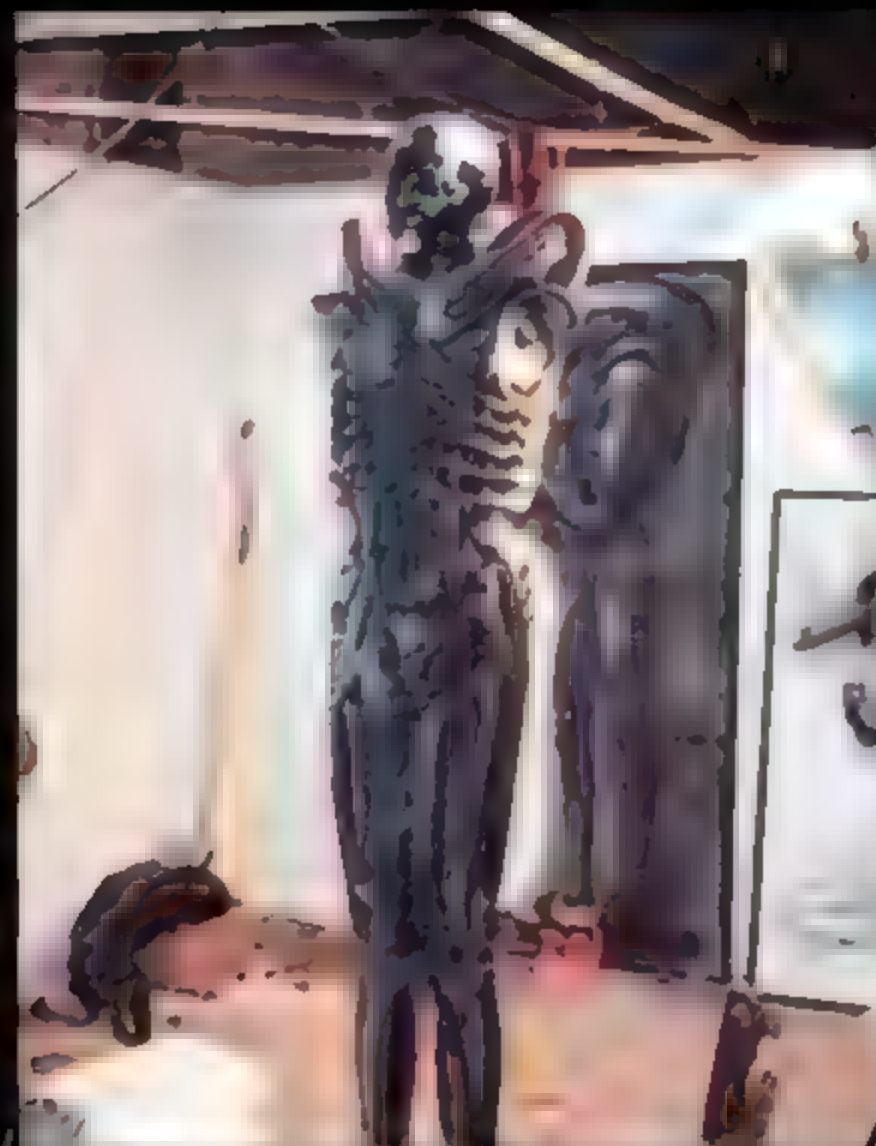
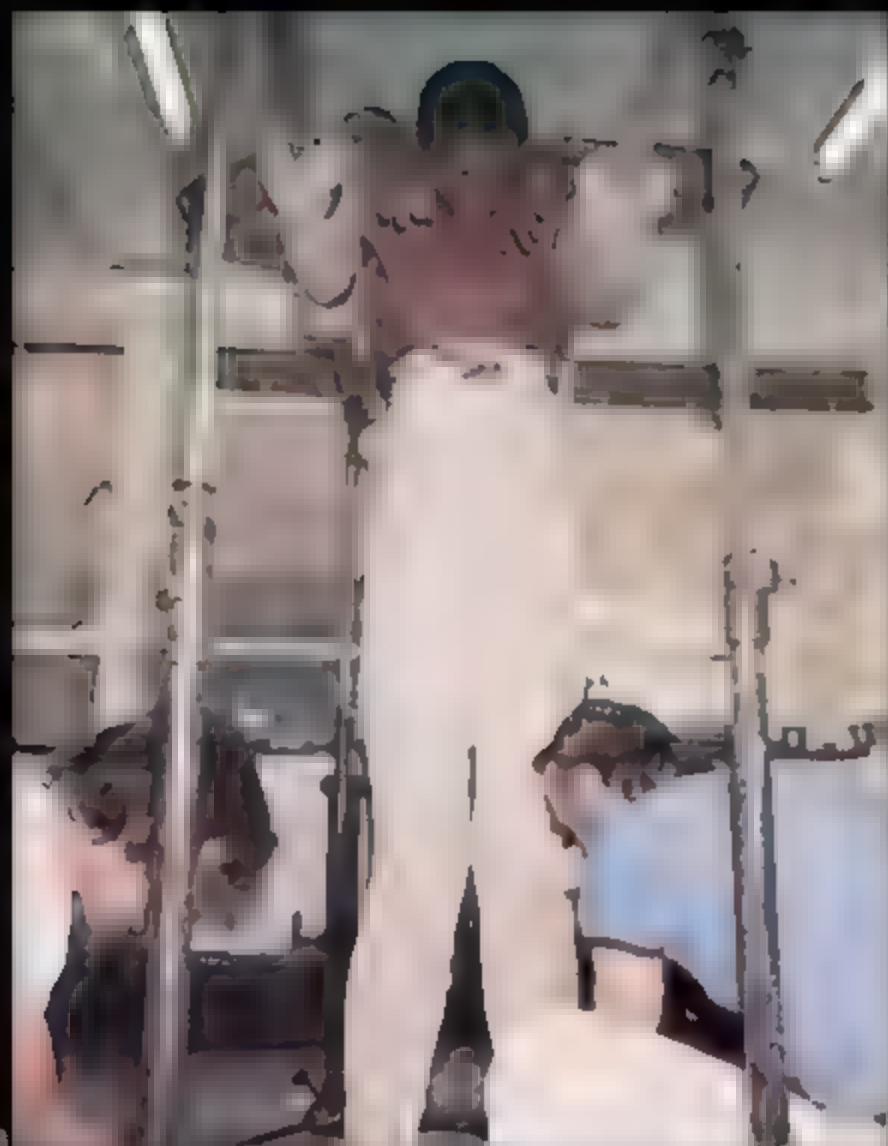


387: Plan for the mechanization of the head, by H.R. Giger

372e: (actual scene)

372: Alien III, side view (version 3), 140 x 100 cm
372e-d: Outflow of mouth mechanism, Alien III

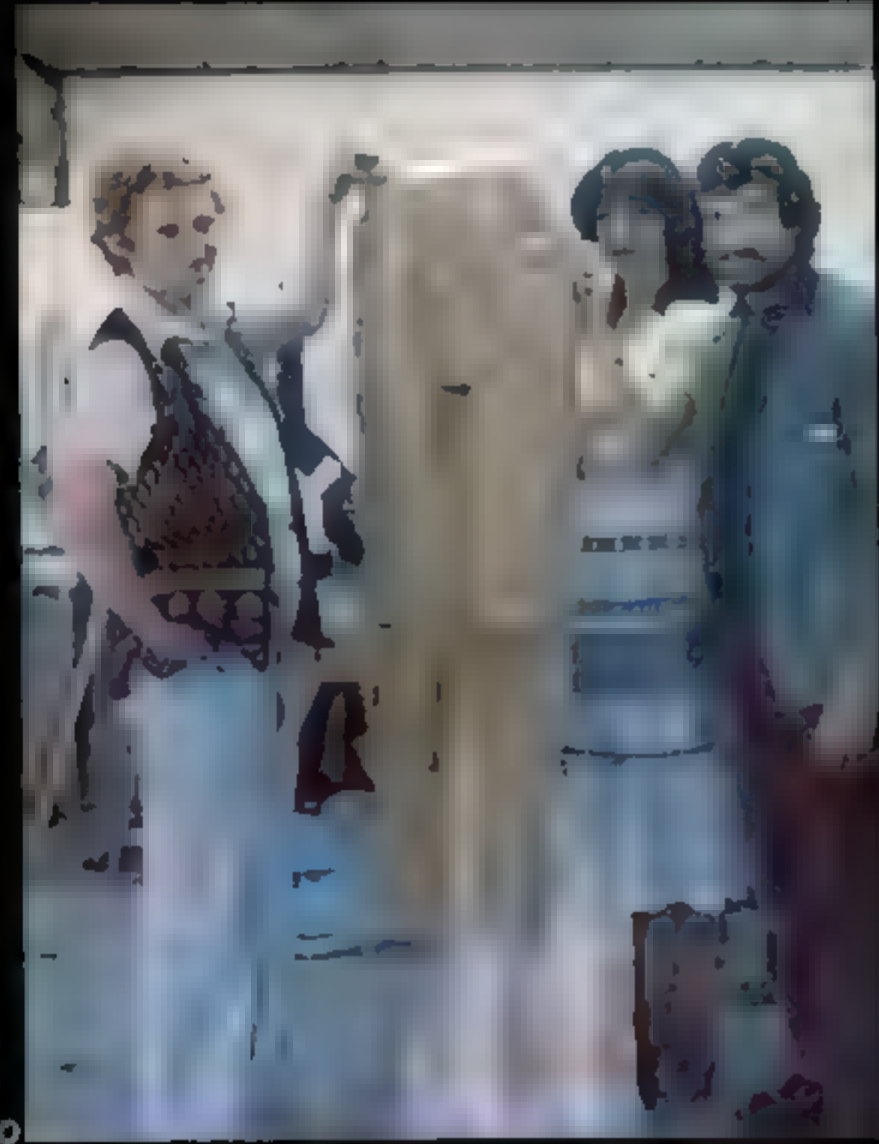




372g: Plaster negative figure of Bolaji

372h-k: Modelling work on Alien III
372i: H.R. Giger and E. Butler modelling the tail

372m: Plaster cast with coating of latex and cork chips
372n-t-s: Shirley, Patty and Butler peeling off the trousers
372p: Plaster cast of stunt-man with fragments of costume
372q: Stunt-man Eddy Powell as Allen III in a filming interval



12 August 1978, Shepperton Studios Andrew has still not come up with any satisfactory result. The moulds have been badly damaged by his experiments and by the great heat, and have to be patched up by the plasterers in meticulous detail, or even made all over again. The only conclusion that Andrew has reached is that what we want can only be done with metal moulds. We simply haven't got time to make such things, and the Alien hysteria in the production department is reaching a climax. They have to start shooting very soon and we still haven't got a single costume that can be used. Time is too short for any more experiments, and we decide to make the whole thing of latex. We finally have to give up our dream of a transparent Alien III. In the car park studio, Shirley, Patty and Butler are endlessly painting layers and layers of latex on the new models. Complete rubber moulds (plate 372r) have got to be prepared in plaster as a result of the new method we've decided on (plates 372m and n), since plaster is more absorbent and can absorb water from the latex milk.

— Once again I'm deeply disappointed. They always told me we should have the best experts in the world to work with us in such a big production, and instead of that we've got a lot of do-it-yourself amateurs without the necessary experience.

18 August 1978, Shepperton Studios Bolaji comes in to try his costume on. Now another problem arises: we're told that the 6ft 10½in Bolaji will be replaced in some of the specially difficult scenes, like the one where he hangs head downwards from a wire, by a stunt-man who is only 1.80 metres (5ft 10in). So now all Bolaji's 'made-to-measure' suits will have to be copied for the stunt-man (plates 376p and q, 405a and b).

— I have the first polyester mould of Alien III standing as a statue in my studio. The monster is so familiar to me that I find it hard to imagine other people being horrified by it. It is kept absolutely secret, under lock and key. Even the actors won't see it until they're confronted with it on the set, so that as far as possible their shock will be genuine and not simply acted. Scott looks in, says a few encouraging words and disappears again. I'm slowly getting fed up with this film.

— Our hotel room overlooking the beautiful Thames also has its snags. It's so tremendously damp that I get rheumatism all the time; sometimes I can hardly bend. Also, the British seem to love draughts. On the rare occasions that the sun comes out, the windows and doors are immediately flung open, so that Mia and I always have colds. Towards the end of our enforced stay (originally I was only meant to stay for six weeks) reporters turn up every other day, and I have to pose for pictures and answer the same old questions like a fool. I'm obliged to do all this by the terms of my contract, but I really do get sick and tired of being told what good publicity it



372r: Silicon rubber moulds with plaster sheath for Alien III

372s: H.R. Giger with fittings for Alien

372t: Alien III, rubber latex wardrobe



is for me. Mia is my only comfort. My problems are also hers — I'm only sorry that she should get the belly-ache when people annoy me. Among the few agreeable moments are our evenings in the King's Head, which we have picked as our living-room. This is where I make the entries in my diary and compensate for my problems by eating too much treacle-tart. Our conversations are confined to the subject of *Alien*. The whole world revolves round this wretched *Alien*.

21 August 1978, Shepperton Studios Rambaldi, the 'magic artist' who brings cinema artists to life, has arrived with his crew, a week late. He's brought with him from Hollywood his agent, Dean, a real Indian. His staff have travelled from Rome. Rambaldi, a charming, extraordinary man, can virtually only speak Italian, although he's been several years in America. The great cases are carefully unpacked and we monster-makers wait on tiptoe to see what has happened to our polyester. We are not disappointed. Rambaldi had done a marvellous job. This is confirmed by the English engineer who is working on the spare head. It looks like a fossil that has fallen victim to a brilliant amateur carpenter. Carlo has built a substructure on the lines of our model cranium, housing a highly complex mechanism. The face muscles etc. can be moved



individually by hand, using ten cables. Scott has the idea of covering the face muscles with preservatives.

30 August 1978, Shepperton Studios Rambaldi has now been here a week. Originally he was only going to stay for three days. He has to remodel his *Alien*'s head, which looks a bit like an ape. We've got six *Alien*'s heads — one mechanized, one distance-controlled and fully mechanized (but not working properly yet), one half mechanized, two unmechanized and one made of plastic foam, which the stunt-man wears for falling from a great height. All these heads have to represent *Alien III*, so we



405: Model for silver *Alien* walking-stick handle

405a: Final preparations for entrance of *Alien III*
405b: *Alien III* in action (actual scene)

405c: *Alien III* in action (actual scene)



can't have a version looking like King Kong.

Meanwhile Shirley, Patty and Butler have got the Alien's two-metre (six-foot) tail ready. The engineer is given the job of bringing it to life. There's a demonstration in his workshop every week, which always shows that it isn't working yet. I believe Rambaldi when he says that the mechanism in the tail is too heavy and that it will never work properly.

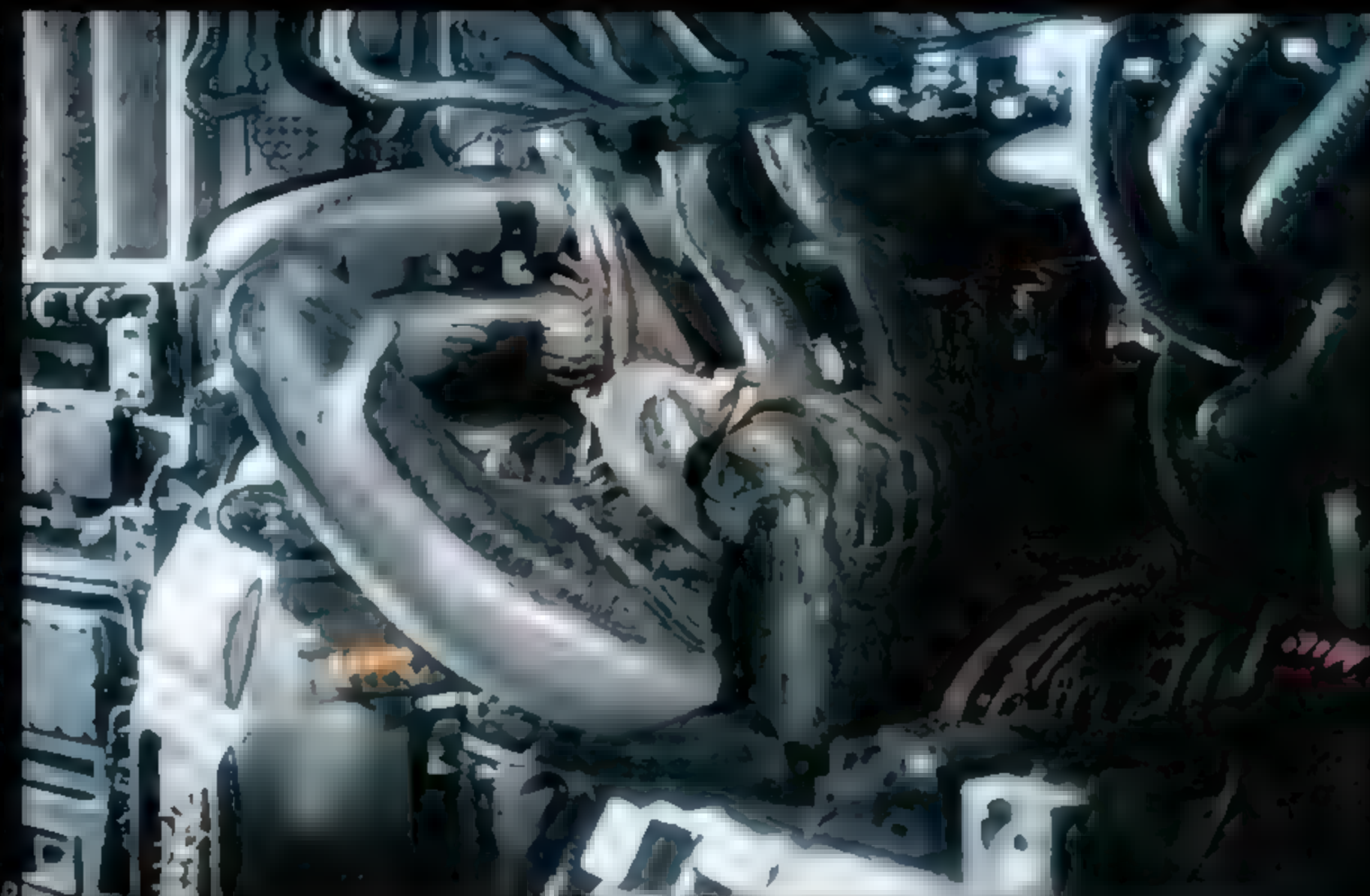
The production manager, who is an ardent nationalist, finds these Italo-American products a thorn in the flesh. He promises me all possible support in my work if I will boost the home-made product, the engineer's Allen's head that only half works, for use in the film. I won't do anything of the sort. I'm only interested in quality, no matter where it comes from, and in the resemblance of the head to my own design; not in this internal nepotism.

6 September 1978, Shepperton Studios The Alien has made its first entrance on stage. The Alien, a bit too short, in which the stunt-man (Eddy Powell) is enclosed is hauled skywards on steel wires so that it can dive down and grab its prey. Head downwards, still hanging from the wires, it is criticized, corrected, discussed and hauled up for another dive. The black, Bolaji, is standing beside me and enjoying himself because, for once, a white man has to play the part of a black.

After each day of filming I squat in my studio and paint the different costumes over and over again. Each time the monster appears it's smeared from head to foot with glycerine and slime, and loses all its colours.

My idealism has slowly ebbed away and I've begun to count the days before the final take. On the other hand, I do now understand the film pros, who don't take things so seriously and have been quietly laughing at my involvement.

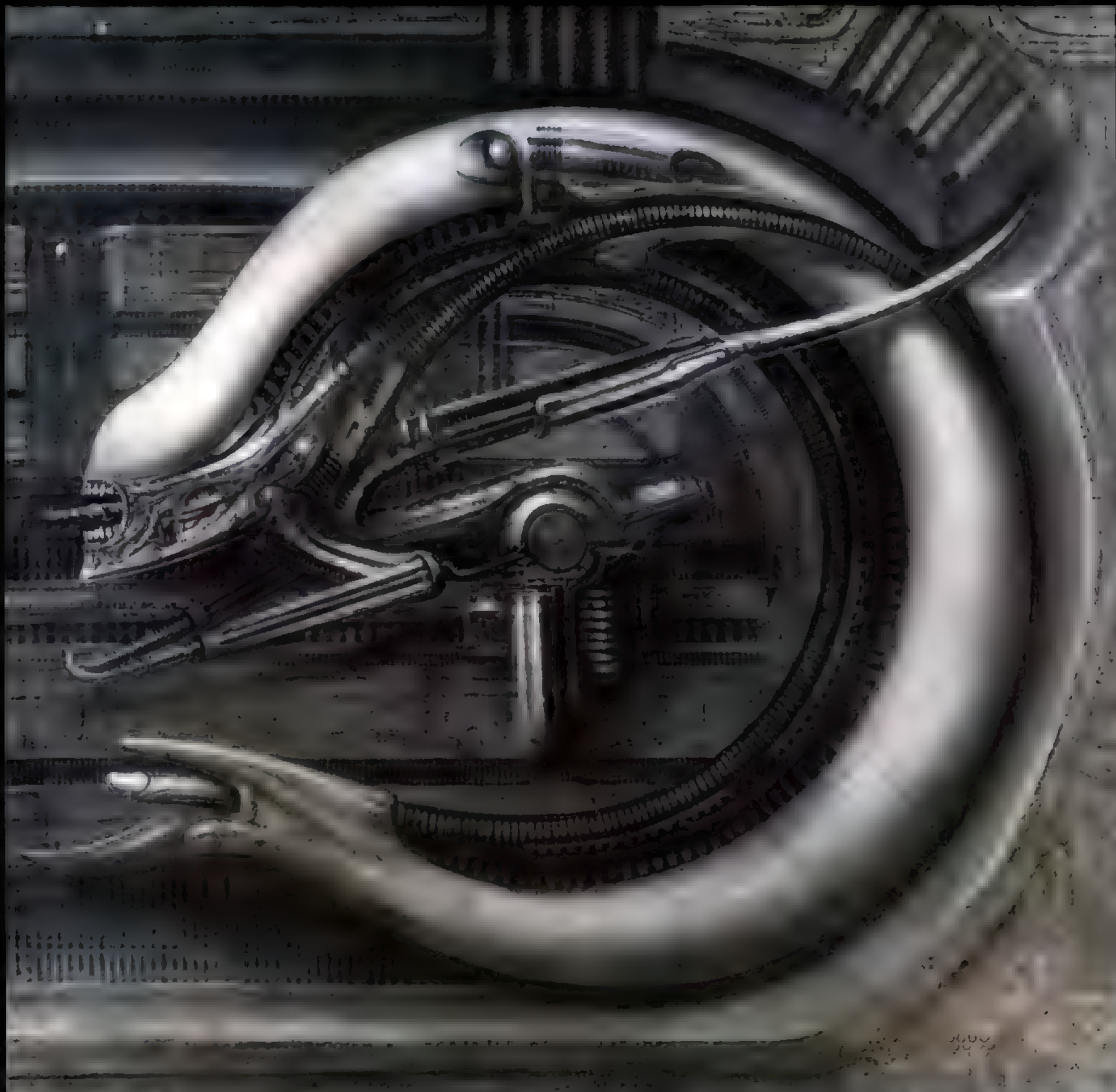
But one thing I know for certain: *Alien* will be an extraordinary film, possibly a classic among horror science fiction films.



405d + e: Alien III in action (actual scene)

405f: Alien III in action (actual scene)







May 14, 1980
Los Angeles, California

Oscar after Oscar changes hands, and we notice in our programs that Fawcett will be presenting the award for Visual Effects. I don't realize she's actually there until she's already mounted the stage. But now the long-awaited moment has come. The man beside her—I have to do a double take—has two metal projections for hands. They remind me of some of H.R.'s pictures—is it another omen? The fateful sentence: "The nominees are..." (Pause, for effect.) "H.R. Giger..." — the American pronunciation is always "Geiger," as in Geiger counter, rather than "Giger," which rhymes with eager — ...Carlo Rambaldi, Brian Johnson, Nick Alder, Denys Ayling, for 'Alien.' — and then the nominees from the other four films. An eternity goes by as the seconds pass, and then we hear the magical incantation: "The winners are..."

She savors the opening of the envelope at length and flashes one of her radiant smiles: "H.R. Giger"... and so on... "for 'Alien.'"

H.R. leaps from his chair like he's just been bitten by a tarantula; he wants to dash right up to the stage. I can just barely hold him back, even though I'm nearly freaking out myself; he really ought to wait until he's invited to the stage officially along with his colleagues. Carlo is so stunned that I have to nudge him before it clicks in his mind. Now they're up on the stage, beaming with happiness, and relief. Carlo gropes for his crib sheet, H.R. utters a simple "Thank you," and Brian Johnson assumes the role of spokesman to express their thanks to Ridley Scott. When Charlton Heston shakes H.R.'s hand I can't keep back the tears any more. H.R. has venerated Heston practically all his life, ever since his father took him to watch "The Greatest Show on Earth." It just boggles his mind.

Now the lucky five belong to the reporters and press photographers. And now, for the first time, I look around me and take in the disappointment on the faces of the "losers," but to be honest I'm simply too overjoyed to commiserate. Up on the stage there's more speechmaking, dancing, singing, and awarding of Oscars. Little by little I begin to worry that H.R.'s blundered into a time warp somewhere. So I breathe a sigh of relief when he reappears, exhausted but still glowing, with his new "baby" under his arm. Incidentally, it's strictly against the rules — expressly forbidden in the regulations — to treat the Oscar with anything less than the respect it is due, or to make jokes with it. The way they literally idolize the Oscar in America makes you think of the reverence so many Europeans feel for Our Lady of Lourdes.

So the 1980 Academy Awards have been presented. The guests leave the pavilion to attend the Governor's Ball. The crowd goes wild whenever someone catches a glimpse of one of the golden statuettes. H.R., vaguely embarrassed, has wrapped his up in a program, but the onlookers chant "Oscar! Oscar! Oscar!" so he shamefacedly unwaddles the diminutive national hero and we pick our way along the red carpet as if we're on pins and needles.

—Mia Bonzanigo

"Harold Russell, Oscar-winning actor in THE BEST YEARS OF OUR LIVES."



H.R. GIGER

Born in Chur, Switzerland on February 5, 1940; worked as a construction illustrator from 1958-1966; attended the School of Arts and Crafts in Zurich from 1962-1966; graduated as an industrial designer. Free-lance painter and designer since 1967.

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 1966
Zurich, Galerie Sennet
- 1968
St. Gallen, Galerie von der Klosterrauern
- 1969
Zurich, "Biomechanismen", Galerie Platte 27
- 1970
Zurich, "Passagen", Galerie Bischofberger
- 1971
Bern, Actiongalerie (with De Es Schwabberger)
- 1972
St. Gallen, Galerie Lesk (Dibi Dabi)
Biel, Galerie 57
Baden, Trudelhaus (with H. Schukmacher)
Kassel, exhibition by the Kunstverein
- 1973
Zurich, Galerie Stummer und Hubschmid
Cologne, Inter Art Galerie Reich
- 1974
Chur, Bündner Kunsthau, "Passagen-Tempel"
- 1975
Zurich, Galerie Silvia Baviera, complete graphic works
Zurich, Meier's Gallery of Modern Art
- 1976
Frankfurt, Galerie Sydow-Zirwitz
Amsterdam, Galerie Kamp
Paris, Galerie Bijan Aslam
Nichterwil, Ugly Club, "The Second Celebration of the Four"
Regensburg, Neue WohnGalerie, complete graphic works
- 1977
Zurich, Kunsthau de Zurich
Paris, Galerie Bijan Aslam
Biel, Galerie Baviera
- 1978
Glarus, Kunsthau (with C. Sandoz)
Büren an der Aare, Galerie Herzog, complete graphic works
Burgdorf, Galerie Bertram, with Claude Sandoz and Walter Wegmüller
- 1979
Zurich, Galerie Baviera, works for the film "Alien"

Amsterdam, Galerie
Kamp
Paris, Galerie Bijan Aslam

1980
Cavigliano, Galerie
Baviera, "H.R. Giger auf
tema del erotismo"
Lausanne, Musée
Cantonal des Beaux-Arts,
works for the film "Alien"
New York, Hensen
Galleries, works for the
film "Alien"
Zurich, Modella-Haus,
works for the film "Alien"

1981
New York, The Museum
of the Surreal and
Fantastique
Biel, Kunsthauskeller

1982
Winterthur,
"N.Y. City-Bilder"
and the Bijan
Aslam collection
Paris, Kunsthalle
Waghaus

1983
Basel, Art 14'83, with Martin Schwartz
Munich, Galerie Hartmann, with Martin Schwartz
Zurich, Galerie Steiner, with Martin Schwartz
Bonn, Galerie Klein, with Martin Schwartz
Cologne, Galerie am Severinewall, with Martin Schwartz

1984
Pfäfers, SZ, Seedorf-Kulturzentrum, "Retrospektive"
Basel, Art 16'85, with Martin Schwartz
New York, Limelight, "The Dune You Will Never See"
Biel, Galerie 58, Sylvie Steiner, with Martin Schwartz

1986
Sierre, Maison Panerose de Courten, "Retrospektive"
Zurich, Galerie a 18
Nuremberg, "Zukunftsräume"

1986
Büren zum Hof, Galerie Herzog

1987
Zurich, Werkstatt-Galerie, Paul Nivergelt

1988
Zurich, Galerie Art Magazin, "Drawings Expanded"
Berlin, Galerie Petersen Rorschach, Museum im Kornhaus, graphic
works
Zug, Wickart, graphic works
New York, Psychedelic Solution Gallery, paintings and prints
St. Gallen, Stadttheater, "Essenz-Symposium für Alchemy"

1989
Chur, Galerie Plana Terra, graphic works

1990
Chur, Bündner Kunsthau, exhibition on the occasion of H.R.G.'s
50th birthday. Exhibition of the 12 H.R. Giger pictures in the
museum's collection
Gruyères, Château de Gruyères, "Alien dans ses meubles"
Wettingen, Informationskult, pictures and graphic works
Garda, Restaurant Cruch Alba, drawings for "The Mystery of San
Gottardo"
Nyon, Galerie Carré Blanc, drawings

1991
Chur, Macadam - La M.J.C. de Chur, "Les Livres d'Esquisses"
Zurich, Galerie Art Magazin, "Arts" book vernissage
Basel, Art 22'91, Galerie Hilt, "One Man Show"
Daves, Painthouse Academy, Window 52, "H.R. Giger's Biomechanic
Visions"

1992
Zurich, Museum Baviera, "Giger-Retrospektive"

1993
Zurich, Museum Baviera, retrospective and works for "Alien" and
"Alien II"
Lausanne, Galerie Humus, retrospective and exhibition of "Swiss
Transit Tunnel" works
Büren zum Hof, Galerie Herzog

Fürth, Galerie P17, drawings for "The Mystery of San Gottardo"
Burgdorf, Galerie Bertram and former Restaurant Krone, pictures and
retrospective of sculptural works, including "Watch Abort" pieces
New York, Alexander Gallery, "Retro-NY", pictures and retrospective
of sculptural works, including "Watch Abort" pieces

1994
Zurich, Galerie Mangisch, "Watch Abort"
Locarno, Galerie Eclisse
Zurich, Odeon, "Communication Art Zurich"

1995
Brussels, "13ème Festival du Film Fantastique"
Gleeson, Kunsthalle, "Konfrontationen", with Sibylle Ruppert
(works from the Paul Walter collection)

1996
Kreuzlingen, Loft, "Meubles"

1996
Milan, Palazzo Bagatti Valsecchi, "H.R. Giger - Visions di Fine
Millennio" (Catalog)

1997
Basel, Galerie Hilt & Art Shop, "H.R. Giger - Projekte. Bilder,
Graphik, Skulpturen"

WORKS IN PERMANENT COLLECTIONS /ON PERMANENT DISPLAY

Chur, Bündner Kunsthalle, paintings and sculptures; Katchschleenter,
Giger Bar, furniture and interior design by H.R. Giger, architect
Thomas Domenig
Tokyo, Giger Bar on four floors, designed by H.R. Giger
Yverdon, Maison d'Ailleurs, SF museum with "Giger's Library Room";
converted prison cells with paintings, furnishings and "Alien"
accessories
St. Gallen, restaurant "Zur letzten Letzten", "700 Jahre Welten auf..."
and sculptural works
Gruyères, H.R. Giger Museum, works displayed in a converted castle
Beverly Hills, Galerie Morphous, largest permanent display of
H.R. Giger's works in the United States

WORK IN FILM, TELEVISION AND THEATRE

1967
"High und Heimkiller", film contribution to U. Gwader's "Polenz-
Schau"; 18 mm, 11 min., magnetic sound, in collaboration with
F.M. Murer

1968
"Swissmade, 2088", collaboration on a science-fiction film by
F.M. Murer; 35 mm in colour, 45 min., sound-on film

1969
"Early Morning", collaboration on a Peter Stein production in the
Zurich Schauspielhaus

1972
"Passagen", colour film about H.R. Giger by F.M. Murer for the
German broadcasting corporation WDR, Cologne, 50 min., sound-on-
film, special prize for Best TV Film at the Mannheim film festival

1973
"Tagtraum", colour film by Jean Jacques Wittmer about the
psychedelic meeting of the three artists Claude Sandoz, Walter
Wegmüller and H.R. Giger in Sottens. Basel, 28 min., magnetic sound

1975
"Giger's Necronomicon", colour film on the work of H.R.G. from
1972-75 by J.J. Wittmer and H.R. Giger; 16 mm, 40 min.

1976
"Dune", décor designs A. Jaderowsky's 70 mm colour film, after the
prize-winning book of the same title by Frank Herbert (film later
realized by David Lynch without H.R. Giger)

1977
"Giger's Second Celebration of the Four", fragment de film réalisé
par J.J. Wittmer et H.R. Giger, 16 mm, son magnétique, 5 min.

1978
"Alien", 117 min., horror science fiction motion picture by Ridley
Scott after the screenplay by Dan O'Bannon, Brandywine prod., Los
Angeles, 20th Century Fox, Los Angeles/London

1979
"Giger's Alien", documentary film on Giger's work for "Alien"; 16 mm
in colour, 34 min., magnetic sound. Produced by Mla Bonzanigo,
H.R. Giger and J.J. Wittmer

1981

"H.R. Giger's Dream Quest", by Robert Kopuit; BCM video recording on 1" tape; 40 min., interview and video animation "Koo Koo", promotion film by H.R. Giger for Debbie Harry, c. 6 min.

1982

"A New Face of Debbie Harry", 30 min., magnetic sound, documentary film by F.M. Murer

1986

"Poltergeist II", 87 min., motion picture by Brian Gibson after the screenplay by Michael Grais and Mark Viktor, MGM prod., Los Angeles

H.R. Giger designs the "Prix Tell", prize for Swiss artists awarded annually by the Swiss TV corporation DRS

1988

"Teito Monogatari", 135 min., motion picture by Akio Jitsusoji after the book by Hiroshi Aramata, Japanese prod.

1990

"Alien III", 112 min., motion picture by David Fincher, 20th Century Fox, Los Angeles

"The Mystery of San Gottardo", own motion picture project by H.R. Giger (in development)

1991

"Alien I-III", documentary by Paul Bernard, includes material and interviews with H.R. Giger, Production by CBS/20th Century Fox

"Alien I", laser disc, includes documentary films of and an interview with H.R. Giger

"Horror Hall of Fame Awards", includes documentary film by H.R. Giger

1992

"Satanskopf", film for the German TV series "Ungelöste Geheimnisse" (Unsolved Mysteries), drawing upon a short story of the occult by H.R. Giger

"Wall to Wall", BBC documentary on cyberpunk films featuring interviews with H.R. Giger, William Gibson and Bruce Sterling

"Omnibus", H.R. Giger interviewed on director Ridley Scott; BBC, London

"Giger's Passage to the Id", 30 min., documentary by Altro Lahtela and Juhani Nurmi for Finnish television

"Sex, Drugs and Giger", 16 mm colour film, 4 1/2 min., animation by Sandra Beretta and Batsch for the Solothurn film festival

1993

"Brother to Shadows", The Alien World of H.R. Giger", documentary by Morpheus International, dir. by David Frame and prod. by James R. Cowan and Clara Höricht-Frame (in development)

1995

"Species", 110 min., horror science fiction film by Roger Donaldson after the screenplay by Dennis Feldman, prod. by Frank Mancuso Jr. for MGM, Los Angeles

"Benissimo", 6'04, ballet for 5 dancers in a 3D installation of Giger pictures. Written and directed by Max Sieber, prod. by the Swiss TV corporation DRS

1996

"Kondom des Grauens", 118 min., H.R. Giger is creative adviser. Directed by Martin Walz after the comic by Ralf König. Produced by Ralph S. Dietrich and Harald Reichbner for Elite Entertainment Group

PRIZES AND AWARDS

"Inkpot Award", San Diego Comic Convention, 1979

"Academy Award", Oscar for Visual Effects on "Alien", 1980

"Readercon Small Press Award", Best interior illustrator and best jacket illustration, Morpheus International, Beverly Hills, 1991

"The Ink-redible Tattoo Award", New York, Tattoo Convention, 1993

"Anerkennungspreis", Grisons, 1994

ORIGINAL PRINTS ISSUED AS PORTFOLIOS

"Ein Fressen für den Psychater", 1966. Artist's cardboard portfolio, screen print, 12 DIN A4 reproductions, drawings, map print. Portfolio signed and numbered in an edition of 50. 42 x 31 cm (approx. 30 copies printed). Printed by H.R. Giger/Lichtpausanstalt Zurich.

"Biomechanoiden", 1969. Portfolio of 8 screen prints, black on silver, all signed and numbered in an edition of 100 et XX. 100 x 80

cm (partially destroyed by fire). Published by Bischofberger, Zurich. Printed by Steiner, Zurich.

"Trip-Tychon", 1970. Portfolio of 4 screen prints in three colours, all signed and numbered in an edition of 100. 100 x 70 cm (partially destroyed by fire). Published by Bischofberger, Zurich. Printed by Silkprint, Zurich.

"Passagen", 1971. Portfolio of 4 multi-coloured serigraphs, all signed and numbered in an edition of 70 + XX. 90 x 70 cm (partially destroyed by fire). Published by Bischofberger, Zurich. Printed by Silkprint, Zurich.

"Second Celebration of the Four", 1977. Clothbound presentation box with embossed title and 8 fold-out sheets, all issues signed and numbered in an edition of 150, of which nos. Nr. 1-10 contain a hand-finished photo (original). 42 x 40 cm. Printed by A. Uldry, Hinterkappelen.

"Alien", 1978. Portfolio of 6 screen prints in four colours, all signed and numbered in an edition of 350. 70 x 100 cm. 100 portfolios released for sale. Published by H.R. Giger and 20th Century Fox. Printed by A. Uldry, Hinterkappelen.

"Erotomechanics", 1980. Portfolio with 6 screen prints in 8 colours, all signed and numbered in an edition of 300. 70 x 100 cm. Published by H.R. Giger. Printed by A. Uldry, Hinterkappelen.

"N.Y. City", 1982. Portfolio with 5 screen prints in 8 colours, all signed and numbered in an edition of 350. Published by Ugly Publishing, Richterswil. Printed by A. Uldry, Hinterkappelen.

"Pilot in Cockpit" and "Alien Egg", Version II, 1978, in an edition of 1000, signed and numbered, 19 1/2" x 27". Limited edition: Dark Horse, 1991.

"E.L.P. II, Brain Salad Surgery", 1973, record cover, 26 1/2" x 22 1/2", and Debbie Harry "Koo Koo", 1981, tryptich, 21 1/2" x 34", LP cover art coll., 1991. 10,000 prints, of which 200 are signed and numbered.

"E.L.P. IX", 28" x 28" (picture 24" x 24"), and "Biomechanoid", 28" x 40" (picture 24" x 34"), 1991. Set of 24 colour prints, signed and numbered in an edition of 495. Published by Morpheus International, Beverly Hills.

"700 Jahre warten auf CH-91", 1991. Accordion-folded portfolio of 50 original lithographs, all signed and numbered (nos. 1-75 on special paper; nos 76-300 on ordinary paper), in an edition of 300. Published by H.R. Giger. Printed by Walo Steiner, Asp.

"H.R. Giger's Baphomet Tarot", 1992. Portfolio book of 24 zinc lithographs of drawings, in an edition of 99. Printed by Walo Steiner, Asp.

"Stier", "Fisch" and "Zodiacbrunnen", 1993. Zinc plate lithographs in five colours. Published by Morpheus International, Beverly Hills. Printed by Walo Steiner, Asp.

"Sil Triptychon", © H.R. Giger and MGM, 1995. Two-colour screen print, 90 x 120 cm, in an edition of 1/290+EA. Published by Morpheus International, Beverly Hills. Printed by A. Uldry, Hinterkappelen.

"Spezies hinter den Kulissen", © H.R. Giger and MGM, 1995. Six-colour screen print, 90 x 120 cm. Edition A: 170 x 120 cm, 1/350 +EA., c. 200 commercially available, all signed and numbered. Edition B: 100 x 70 cm, 1/400 +EA., not commercially available, all signed and numbered. Published by MGM and H.R. Giger. Printed by A. Uldry, Hinterkappelen.

"Hieroglyphics", © H.R. Giger, 1998. Full-color giclée, 33" x 46 1/2", in an signed and numbered edition of 150. Published by Galerie Morpheus International, Beverly Hills

SPECIAL PROJECTS

"Video-Clip vom Odessa-Film C für Pioneer", Japan, 1985

"Giger-Bar", Tokyo, extending over four floors, 1988

"Baphomet - Das Tarot der Unterwelt", pack of tarot cards designed by H.R. Giger/Akron for AG Müller, CH-8212 Neuhausen a R., Switzerland. Edition with book, 1993; edition with abridged book, 1993; edition with abridged book and CD, 1995. German, English and French

"Giger-Bar", Kalchbühlcenter, Chur, 1992

"Dark Seed", award-winning computer game employing images based on H.R. Giger's works. Cyberdreams, Los Angeles, 1992

"Screensaver", computer game employing images based on H.R. Giger's works. Cyberdreams, Los Angeles, 1995

"Dark Seed II", computer game employing images based on H.R. Giger's works. Cyberdreams, Los Angeles, 1996

"Mousepads", "Passage XIV" and "Necronomicon I", by Galerie Morpheus International, Beverly Hills, 1996

"The H.R. Giger Calendar of the Fantastique", published annually since 1993 by Galerie Morpheus International, Beverly Hills

"The H.R. Giger Set", folder comprising 1996 3D calendar, blank book, address book and postcard book, Benedikt Taschen Verlag, Cologne, 1995

"H.R. Giger 3D-Wandkalender 1996", special edition as portfollo, signed and numbered, in an edition of 350 and 100 artist's copies, 1995

"H.R. Giger Diary 1996", Benedikt Taschen Verlag, Cologne, 1995

"H.R. Giger's Zodiacbrunnen" (in development)

"H.R. Giger's Art Watches", 2 watches featuring "Li II" and "Landscape XIX", numbered collector's edition, Swiss parts movement, Galerie Morpheus International, Beverly Hills 1997

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BOOKS BY H.R. GIGER PUBLISHED BY GALERIE MORPHEUS INTERNATIONAL

GIGER'S ALIEN
H.R. GIGER'S NECRONOMICON I
H.R. GIGER'S NECRONOMICON II
H.R. GIGER'S BIOMECHANICS
SPECIES DESIGN
H.R. GIGER'S FILM DESIGN
H.R. GIGER'S RETROSPECTIVE 1964-1984
The H.R. GIGER CALENDAR, published annually





Alien has caused an unprecedented response. No small part of this is due to H.R. Giger whose designs for the film are the backbone of the story.

Giger's *Alien* provides a complete record of the months and months of painstaking work that resulted in two hours of terrifying celluloid. Sketches, original paintings, photographs of scenery and the Alien under construction and scenes from the film are linked by Giger's detailed diary of his thoughts and actions at the time.

Giger combines metallic and organic imagery for a startling effect (*Future Life*). His paintings are eerily overpowering (*Starlog*). The man has an essentially unwholesome viewpoint. His paintings are perverse, obnoxious and disgusting, but absolutely gorgeous (Dan O'Bannon, *Alien* writer). It's like taking a drug — if there's an accident in the street, everyone goes to look at it, even if it gives you a heart attack (Giger, *Newsweek*).

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